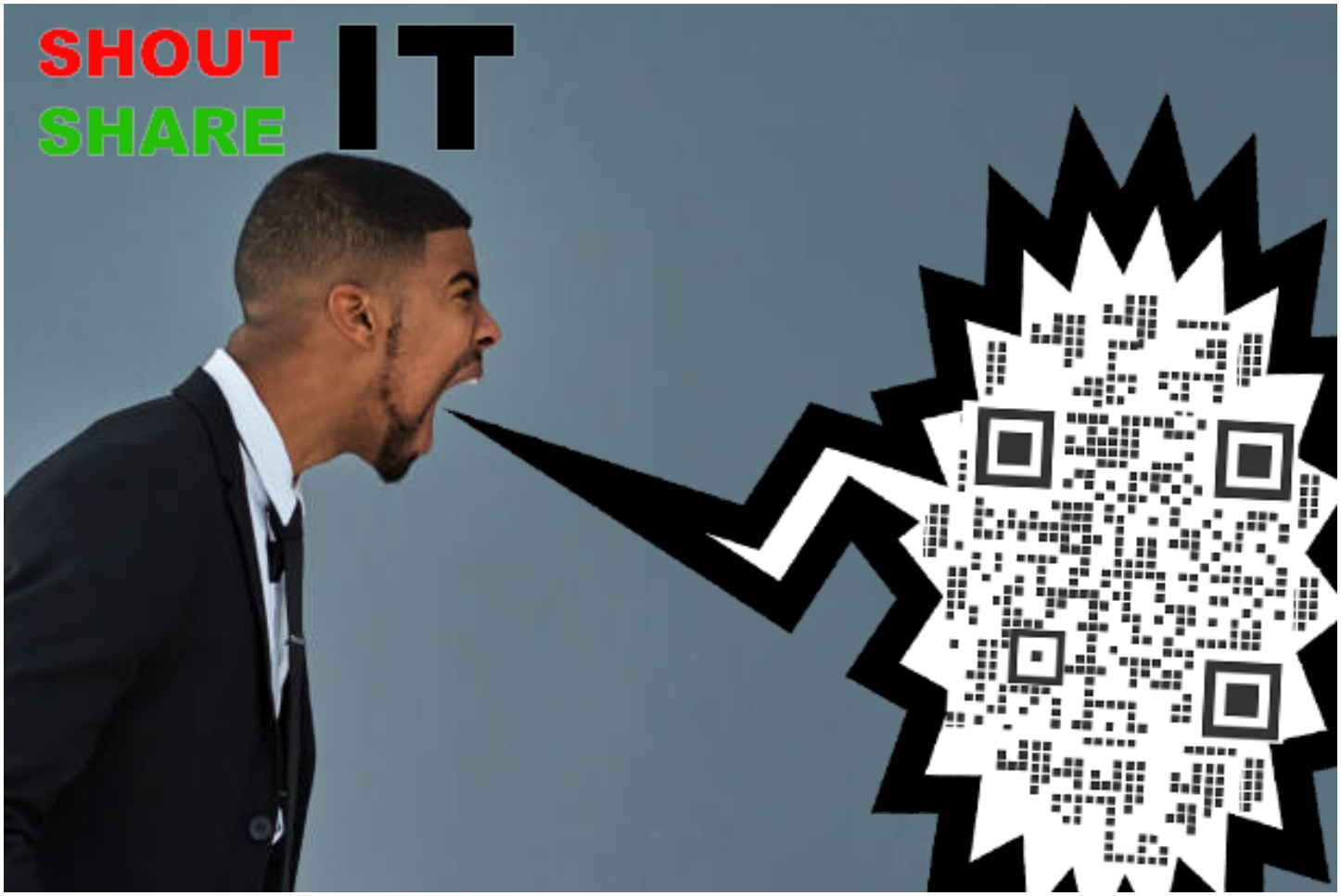
When you overcome
THE FEAR OF DEATH...
you start to Live!

By
AiR
Atman in Ravi

Why Die every day in Fear,
Why not Live with Joy till you Die?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Ravi V. Melwani

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PREFACE

As I look at the world today, there is an intense fear in people. This fear has shut people into their homes. It has locked down practically all the countries and closed borders so that there is no chance for a killer virus to destroy lives. It is actually not the fear of the virus, it is the fear of Death.

While I write several books about Life and Happiness and I cover topics like Enlightenment, Realization, and Spirituality, I also write about Death and how to overcome Suffering. All this goes hand in hand in living a fulfilling life.

There are two things that are beyond our control - Birth and Death. We have no control over when we are born, to whom we are born and where we are born. Just as we have no control over our birth, we have no control over our death. However, death is certain. Nobody can escape it. There are some who try to commit suicide causing an unnatural end to their life. Many a time, attempts at suicide fail and people remain like a vegetable in a hospital bed for the rest of their lives. Ultimately every 'body' has to die but death comes only once. Some people live till they die. Others die every day that they live. The fear of death destroys their life and they lose this beautiful present called 'Life'.

Why should we fear death when we can't escape from it? Why

should we worry about death when we have no control over what will cause it? We fear death because we fear the loss of all that belongs to us, our possessions and our relationships, and all that is known. We also fear death because of the beyond that is unknown. The mystery of what lies beyond causes intense fear. Often, we are shocked to see a dead body after an untimely demise. We are also saddened to see the cremation of near and dear ones or the burial of somebody who was an intimate part of our life.

Very few people understand the true meaning of death. They realize that only the body dies. Death is not the end. It is just a bend. They are the rare few who truly live till they die. The rest are paranoid even at the thought of death. They desist from a conversation about death just as they take a longer route to drive home to avoid a graveyard that comes on the way.

When people hear of the news that somebody dear to them has been diagnosed with cancer, don't they shudder? They are not scared of cancer but the signal of death that it pronounces. There are people who don't want to go on a flight. What if they die in an air crash? There are people who never go snorkelling and skiing, never go on a cruise, never experience the thrill of paragliding. Fear grips them and paralyses them from taking any step forward.

Today the whole world is suffering because of fear, the fear that they could be infected by a virus, the fear that they may

die, the fear that they may not get a vaccine, the fear that the vaccine may not work and in fact, cause an adverse reaction. People are living in fear.

Everybody who is sick is now gripped with a new media buzz that all those who have comorbidities have a larger chance of dying as the virus destroys the immune system. Therefore, those who have heart disease, asthma and lung issues, kidney failures or any other ailment, have become paranoid that they will die if they are infected with the virus. The truth is that a very small percentage of people is getting infected and a very large percentage is getting cured and discharged. But fear is playing a trick. It is concealing the facts while projecting the fear of death.

Fear has practically halted all commerce in the world for several months. The fear of death has paused the whole world as the year 2020 has literally escaped us. Have large populations in the world been wiped out? The death rate in 2020 has not significantly increased when compared to 2019.

Is it that Covid-19 is an illusion? No, it is not. It seems real. People are getting infected and it is contagious. But have we made a mountain out of a molehill? Fear has! That is why many people have been infected but not that many have died - the fear is far more intense than the real danger. There is a problem, and one certainly needs to take precautions. But when we start reacting instead of responding, when our head is overtaken

by our heart, then fear causes more damage than the good that it could do.

Today, people have stopped living life. Life has come to a standstill and it is not for one day, one week, or one month. A year has passed! And we are still grappling – not with Covid, but with fear. Not just with fear, but the fear of death. Life has changed.

Those who have lived many decades recall that there has been nothing like this since the deadly Spanish flu of 1918. Maybe nature causes such an upheaval once in a hundred years to wake us up and make us realize certain things. People are working from home. People are shopping from home. People have been locked up in their homes. It's not that people like to do it, but they are forced to do it. Fear has pushed people into their homes and covered them with masks, face shields and sanitizers like never before. The whole world is living with Corona phobia.

Who is dying from Covid? It's not a secret. The elderly and those with comorbidities are largely victims of Covid-19. But isn't it true that they, anyway had more chances of dying? By labelling every such death as a 'Covid death', we have only made the fear of Covid more deadly.

The fear of death, of being exposed to the virus and dying, has made people stop living. It's been a year since countries

closed their borders out of fear. The airline industry is devastated. Many hotels around the world are shut. But far more damage than what has been created by the economic disaster which is visible, is the mental trauma Covid has caused, the fear of something invisible. When will we overcome the fear of death? When will we restart to live? While we are all going to die, why are we dying every day in fear? It's time to Live!

The deer runs faster than the tiger, but is a prey.
What is the cause - Fear is what they say.
As long as it doesn't overcome the Fear of Death,
It will be caught in the paws, as it loses its breath.

INTRODUCTION

You and I are alive. We are Conscious of this world, just as we are Conscious that one day we will die. Death is certain. But just like we do not control our birth, even death is not in our hands. It will come when it has to, and we must learn to surrender to it.

Today the whole world is living with the fear of death. No country across the continents has been spared by Covid-19. The virus has paralyzed life across the world for a whole year and is still stopping us from living a normal life.

What is the real problem? Is the virus such a deadly disease? Is Covid wiping out large sections of the global population? No! While Covid exists just like cancer, lung disease, heart attack, is it causing more suffering and death? But the fear of Covid is creating devastation. The fear of death that may arise out of Coronavirus has stopped people from living.

People are locked up in their homes as if there are dinosaurs, or crocodiles outside their homes. People's fear has gone way beyond and has become panic. Every day people are scared that they will be infected with Covid, that they may not get a ventilator and they may die.

What has caused this disaster? We can accuse the virus a little

bit, but probably, it is the media that has brainwashed the world. Then to add to this is the reaction from one country and another, and a few deaths magnified, have locked people into their homes.

We all fear death. But do we know the true meaning of death? Can we escape death? The body will die, but what happens to us when we depart from this world? What is the Truth?

As long as we are paralyzed with fear, we will live with ignorance. Our panic will stop us from looking at the facts, and we will live with misery and stress because we fear we will die.

This book will help you face not just Covid and the fear it causes, it will help you to live. It will help you overcome the fear of death as it will make you understand what death is and what lies beyond. It will Enlighten you with the Truth as it will help you overcome the ignorance that you live with. It will inspire you to put things in proper perspective as you replace Fear with Faith. It will show you a way to peace and happiness as you surrender and accept. We have a choice. We can live till we die, or just exist dying every day that we live.

Enough time has gone. It's time to wake up, to snap out of our fear, to overcome the fear of death and to start living fearlessly with peace and bliss, in surrender and acceptance. Or we can continue to live with Corona phobia and jump out of our skin whenever somebody coughs or sneezes thinking that we are going to die! Let us flip over from Fear to Faith.

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CHAPTER

01

THE FEAR OF DEATH

Death comes to us but once.
Why then do we live in the constant fear of death?

The fear of death envelops all of humanity. When the thought of death enters the mind, we shudder. We link death to be dark and painful. Thus we mourn death, just as we celebrate life.

But life and death are two sides of the same coin. Any living organism who is born, must die. We are mortal. We come to this earth stage and we go. It's just a show! Because we are ignorant about the *true* meaning of death, we don't even want to get into a conversation about it.

Most fears are not just fear. They are in essence, fear of death and of pain. Why do we fear a disease? Because we consider it to be painful. We fear loss of love, collapse of our business, loss of name and fame, because all of these make us unhappy. The misery caused by death is beyond the trivial sufferings of life. The fear of death is the ultimate fear because we think that death is 'The End'. Everything is over, nothing is left.

What do we see happening to the mortal remains of the one who was alive? The body is set on fire, cremated, only to become ashes. If not burnt to dust, it returns to dust as it is lowered below the ground in a coffin and left to the world under to be destroyed. And who cremates or buries the body? The very near and dear ones of the deceased, who loved the person so dearly. Why then is the marvel of this beautiful body so mercilessly destroyed? Because there is no other choice. Once the life within is no more, the body is nothing.

While the fear of death troubles people around the world, not many people go in a quest to understand what death is and why we fear it. Is death actually the end, or is it a bend? Who actually dies, when people say, 'He departed, he passed away or he moved on'? Because mystery shrouds the truth about death, we continue to be miserable, not knowing the truth that lies beyond. The fear of death grips humanity, as we wait outside an ICU in a hospital or watch with bated breath when somebody is battling life.

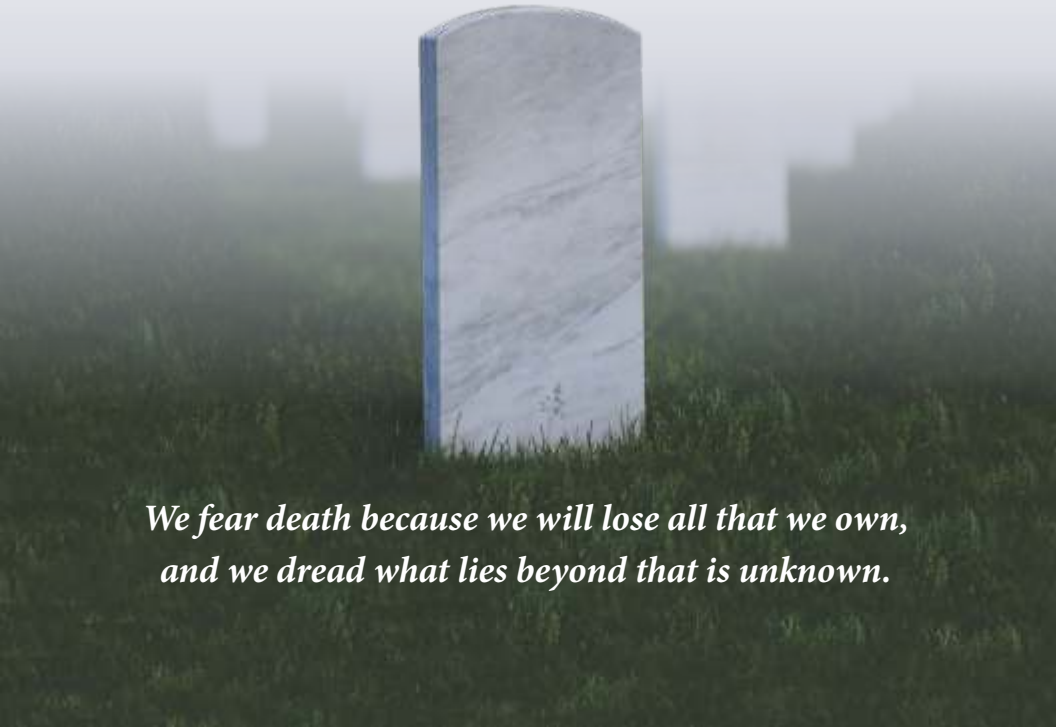
Why do we fear death? Why do we suffer the very thought of it? Why does it cause so much anxiety and so much pain, when it is a reality that we all have to face, we all have to accept? The fear of death stops us from living. It is the cause that makes us pause, makes us worry, makes us feel so helpless. Still, even the richest man in the world can do nothing about it.

Is there a way to overcome the fear of death? Is there a way to accept this reality? Is there a way to realize the truth about death, to know that it is not the end, it is just a bend and we can transcend death? Then we can celebrate life, not in fear of death, but living joyously, every day that we live.

CHAPTER

02

WHY DO WE FEAR DEATH?



We fear death because we will lose all that we own, and we dread what lies beyond that is unknown.

Every human being fears death. Whatever be our nationality, our religion or our culture, we cry when we see somebody die. Why? Because death is unpleasant. It is the end of the life of somebody dear to us. It is the ultimate reality of life, when one never returns. It is that eternal sleep from which one never awakens. But, there are times when we celebrate the death of a criminal, somebody who created terror on earth.

At death, the story of the life of the one who was alive comes to an end. When we see somebody die, we wonder - What will happen when I die? It is natural to fear death, but the fear makes us miserable because we are ignorant about the truth of death.

What do we see happening at death? The one who was alive loses everything that belonged to him. In a flash, he is no more, and thus all his relationships come to an end. He was somebody's son, somebody's father, somebody's brother, husband or friend. But death destroys all relationships. What lies in front of us is just a corpse, lifeless and useless. Our fear is beyond just the loss of relationships. All his possessions no more belong to him and are taken away by his near and dear ones. His house, his car, his wealth, his assets and whatever he treasured snaps out of his ownership in that moment of death. The thought that we will lose everything, our possessions and people so dear, makes us dread death.

We are also scared to die because we don't know what lies beyond death. There are so many theories, mysteries and

fairy tales, but we don't know the truth. Nobody does. This gives us jitters at the very thought of death. Will we suffer when we are cremated or buried? Our body will return to dust, but what will happen to us? The fear of the unknown that lies beyond death creates stress and anxiety.

Thus, we fear death because of the despair of losing everything that belongs to us, and our ignorance about what lies beyond death makes the fear of death deep-rooted in our subconscious. Can we stop the occurrence of death? Can anybody in this world live forever? Can a billionaire exchange his money and escape from the jaws of death? Can the President, the most powerful man on earth getaway from the claws of death? Nobody can. Nobody can escape death, but there is a way to overcome the fear of death and to live. We can choose to live, worrying about all that we will lose, or we can realize the truth about death and beyond and celebrate every moment of life. As long as we fear death, it stops us from *truly* living. It makes us live in fear as we slowly and steadily approach our end. There is a way to get away from this fear of death. There is a way to realize the truth about death and then, put it aside to celebrate life.

CHAPTER

03

2020 - THE YEAR OF FEAR

Every year is known for something special.
In 2020, the whole world lived with the fear of death.

After 100 years, the entire world was gripped by a pandemic. A little virus that appeared in Wuhan, China, spread across 200 countries and shut down the world. Never before in a century did countries close their borders. Hotels shut down, and all businesses were closed. Entertainment centres locked their premises and even schools and universities, put a lock on their gates for an entire year.

2020 was a year of fear. Covid-19 crept into the new year making people worried, 'Am I going to catch the virus? Am I going to die?' The mysterious virus was spreading in ways unknown to man, through a cough, through a sneeze and even through the eyes. It seemed to live on surfaces and people were scared of practically touching anything. Fear caused a new world to emerge, a world of masks, gloves, and sanitizers. Social distancing became the new norm of life and even though a year has passed and we have moved from 2020 to 2021, fear has continued to grip humanity.

What was the cause of this fear? Was the virus so deadly that anybody who got it would die? No! It is contagious, but only a very few of those over the age of 60 or 70 were succumbing to the virus. Those who were diseased with lung, kidney and other comorbidities were attacked by the virus as it blew up the immune system of a human being. No doubt that the virus was a cause of concern, but what made the world shut down? The fear of death! Although only a few people were dying, the deaths observed by the world were enough to create panic

and then like fear does, it spread like a fire. One country declared a lockdown and then another, followed by the whole world.

The media added fuel to the fire. They made the wolf look bigger than it was. They made people lock themselves up by creating more fear than the danger actually was. This destroyed not just economies across the world but created mental trauma in the lives of billions of people, who had to lock themselves up in a room, not just for days or weeks, but for 12 months of the year. Thus, the year 2020, ended as the year of fear.

As 2021 started, the fear slowly started subsiding. People have now understood that Covid is not a killer. Fear is! Though there are restrictions imposed by authorities and governments, people have embraced courage and started living. A vaccine has rolled out, but it will be years before the entire world is protected from the virus. Probably before that, there would be herd immunity and the fear of dying from Coronavirus will end. Covid-19 has taught humanity a lesson. It provokes man to think, '*Did we use a cannon to kill a mosquito? Did we not bring down the roof to kill the rat?*' Those who are still living with fear will never realize the truth; they will never be brave enough to face the fear. They will take fear to their grave. But 2020 has taught some people how to overcome the fear of death and to live.

CHAPTER

04

FEAR IS A FALSE EXPECTATION APPEARING REAL

Fear is not a 'real' Danger;
FEAR is a False Expectation Appearing Real.

Fear is an emotion that warns us of a threat, a perceived danger of tremendous pain and even death. It is a false alarm of a possible crisis. Most often, it is not a real danger that causes fear. Fear makes danger look imminent, look *real*. It escalates our stress, worry and anxiety, as it multiplies the possibility of a tragedy or a disaster.

Therefore, the best way to understand fear is the acronym of fear itself, F E A R – False Expectations Appearing Real. It is a perception, an imagination of a danger that is going to strike us. The danger may not be deadly, but fear makes it look so. While we were born with the emotion of fear to protect us, fear has become our biggest enemy. The mind produces fearful thoughts that steal our peace. It creates an imaginary problem where there is none. It expects a disaster, a tragedy to befall us and then, stops us from living. It paralyzes us as it makes the danger look so real that we live in constant fear of it.

But is fear real? No, it is not! That is a danger, not a fear. Fear creates far more dangers in our life than there are actually. It creates a phobia; it makes us paranoid, not because there is real pain or tragedy, but because the mind imagines there is. Therefore, fears are not deadly, but danger is. We must kill fear before fear kills us. Today, the world has stopped living because the world is gripped by the fear of death. The facts are different. There is a contagious pandemic but it is not killing people. Fear is! The fear of the disease is killing far more people than the disease actually is. It is a False Expectation that is

Appearing Real. Fear is making it appear that a large part of the world population will be wiped out, when in reality, a tiny percentage is infected, and a very tiny percentage is dying solely due to the virus.

Death is certain and we all live with the fear of death. We fear any growth to be cancer, just as a little gastrointestinal pain makes us believe we are having a heart attack. Humanity is gripped by the fear of death. Therefore, some people dread to go on a ship or an airplane or even paragliding, scuba diving, or skiing. Every activity has an element of danger, but it is not that everybody doing any of these activities is sure to die. However, the fear of death exists.

Today, the fear of Covid, the False Expectation that Coronavirus will kill us is Appearing so Real that this fear of death has become the cause of the pause in the entire world. Although the globe itself is rotating, practically everything in it has come to a standstill because of fear – a False Expectation that is Appearing Real. As long as we live with these False Expectations, we are creating *real* anxiety that is stealing our happiness and our peace and stopping us from living because we fear that we are going to die.

CHAPTER

05

ARE WE SCARED OF THE VIRUS?

People are not running away from a virus, they are fleeing from possible death.

Is the world living with the fear of the virus? No! Actually the world is not scared of a cough, a headache or fever. People around the globe are scared of death! There is no doubt that the virus by itself is just another flu, but the difference is that there is an occasional death which is reported as a Covid death. This makes people paranoid with fear. They are scared to die after contracting the Covid infection.

If there was no fear of death, there would be no fear of the virus. Governments across the continents would not introduce legislation to force people to wear masks and distance themselves. They have only joined in the panic that has made their people horrified with the fear of the possibility of death in the near future. Statistics show that 99% of infected people are being discharged, but 1% are dying. A further investigation reveals that this 1% is primarily aged and diseased. But the fear of death makes us blind to the facts. Thus we are scared of the virus and think of it to be a killer virus.

The world has created visuals and has picturized the virus to be deadly, with spikes and colours. And accompanied by rules and regulations, aggravated by panic, restrictions have been imposed. All this has made the virus look life-threatening. If there was no fear of death due to the virus, it would not lock down the world. It's time to look deeper and find the source of our fear. We are trying to search in Wuhan, China for the source of the virus, but we are not contemplating the source of our fear. The cause of our fright

and our dread of the disease is beyond doubt, death. Every human being wants to live. Nobody wants to die. This is an essential desire implanted in a human being that makes him protect himself from all possible dangers. More important than protecting ourselves from dangers, a time has come where we must protect ourselves from our fears. Dangers are rare and occasional. Fears are common and constant. Our own mind is constantly creating fear, creating a danger when there is none and stopping us from living our normal life.

Can you imagine that the entire world is so scared of the virus? While this is what appears to be on the surface, deep within, it is not the virus but the fear of death that is the real disaster. The fact is that the virus exists, not death. However, the fear of death is ruling the world today.

Death is certain. Everybody has to die. But death will come when it has to. Today, the virus is one of the smallest causes of global deaths, but the fear of the virus has become the biggest one. People are more scared of the virus, when in reality, heart attacks, cancer, lung disease, kidney disorders, and even car accidents are killing far more people than Covid. Are people going to stop driving cars because of the fear of dying in road accidents?

CHAPTER

06

WHEN WE FEAR, WE CANNOT SEE THE FACTS

Fear actually makes us blind.
Our anxiety hides the facts behind.

Don't we see that today, people are living in fear? The fear of death is making a man drive a car for hours alone, but with a mask on his face. If a deadly virus was actually in the atmosphere, then hordes of people should have been killed by it. But even after one year of the virus striking, only 0.02% of the global population has died infected by the virus. Why does fear still loom over the world? Because fear is making us blind. Instead of taking precautions, we are living in panic. The panic is affecting our immunity, just as it is overpowering our mind. It is making us prisoners in our own homes.

While several countries have started to open their doors and communities around the world have realized the trick played by fear, the fear of death still remains. As long as the fear of dying is the root cause of this panic, people around the globe will continue to lock themselves up, even after they are vaccinated or after there is herd immunity in their community. Such is the power of the fear of dying.

The facts are public. They are published. In India, over 25,000 people die every day. Less than a few hundred are dying due to Covid-19. The fact is that all those who are dying may have otherwise succumbed either to old age or comorbidities, but they are labelled as Covid deaths. The fear of death is making us blind, just as it is putting all the facts behind, and it continues to rule our life. Intelligent people have become victims because the fear of death is so strong in humanity.

What are the facts? People who have got Coronavirus have symptoms of fever and cough, but the fact is that less than 2% of the global population that is infected by the virus has actually died. The fact is that even after one year, barely 1% of the world population has been infected. The fact is that, in the list of the causes of death in the world today, heart disease, strokes, pulmonary and respiratory disorders, cancers, and kidney diseases are causing far more deaths than Covid in the young and healthy population. But fear is hiding the fact. We are more influenced by the myth than the truth. In a country like India, which has the second-highest cases, barely 1% of the population is infected, and 0.01% has died. In America, which has reported to have the highest number of cases, 8% of the population has caught the virus, but only 0.15% has died and this small percentage includes all those who have other diseases, as well as those who are above 80, 90 and even 100 years and who may have anyway died. But the fear of death that has gripped us, refuses to see the facts, although the truth stares at us in our face.

Instead of celebrating this Gift called Life, we just exist with our Fears and our Tears. We let the Fear of Death imprison us, and this stops us from discovering life. We have a choice. Either we can continue to live with the fear of death and die before we die or we can overcome our fear and live with the facts, taking precautions, but not stopping our life from unfolding day after day.

CHAPTER

07

WE REACT, WE DON'T RESPOND

When we are prisoners of Fear, we React.
We don't use our Intellect to Respond to the Fact.

Because we live with fear, and because the fear of death rules our emotions, our actions follow suit. We don't respond. We just react. The subtle part of our existence, our mind and our intellect, create thoughts, just as we have the gift to discriminate. The human being is the only living being with a fully developed intellect. But unfortunately, we are unable to use our intellect because it is disabled by fear. The fear of death makes us blind to the reality and results in knee-jerk reactions. This destroys our peace and our joy.

For one to live in this world that is constantly unfolding with joy and sorrow, with good news and tragedies, one has to be Conscious of the Truth. One has to respond without fear dominating one's life. If we let fear take command, all perceived dangers, which are not real, will grow as 'real' fears and we will start anticipating disasters. The FEAR makes False Expectations Appear Real. That's why it kills our ability to respond and makes us slaves to our reactions.

The media plays a big role in influencing our reactions. In today's world, traditional media has grown multi-fold with digital media and bad news spreads like wildfire. The authenticity of the news is not controlled and thus has come about the concept 'fake news'. News that is not well investigated and endorsed is circulated to make the world react. This only increases our stress levels and anxiety. What is the way to escape from this anxiety and to live with Peace? We have to change our behaviour from 'reacting' to 'responding'. We have to analyze every perceived

fear before accepting it as a real danger. We have to, by default, disbelieve every bad news before accepting it and reacting to it. Otherwise, we will stop eating tomatoes just because somebody sent a WhatsApp message saying it causes cancer. We will give up our intake of lime juice because we fear it will corrode our intestines and we will die. If we keep reacting to every fake news, we are sure to take anxiety to our graves.

Today, the world lives in fear and the biggest fear of all is death. This has compelled us to stop living our normal life. It's time for us to take charge of our life, not to hand over our life to fear. When it comes to death, we must live with faith, and realize that death is not in the hands of a person or product or a pandemic. Death is in the hands of the Divine. There need not be a reason for a person to die. Anybody can die at any time. But if we react to every fear and we imagine we will die out of it, it will stop us from living and enjoying this gift of life. Eventually, we all have to die. When we constantly react to fear, we die several times before death actually arrives. It's time to stop reacting to every fear and imagine it will cause death by responding with our intellect and living with faith, with courage, with joy and with peace. Let us eliminate the fear of death from our life.

CHAPTER

08

FEAR FOLLOWS THE HERD

Fear steals our ability to reason and
makes us blindly follow the herd.
It robs our Discrimination...That will free us to fly like a bird.

Fear imprisons us. It steals our freedom of living fearlessly. It creates imaginary bars and locks us up. These are not real dangers. They are phobias or just fears that stop us from carrying out several actions that would otherwise give us great pleasure and joy. Consider this for instance - a whole community that used to eat and enjoy mushrooms suddenly bans mushrooms from their menu because they hear of the death of a person after eating mushrooms. The fear of death causes such knee-jerk, irrational reactions. The whole world is eating mushrooms and how many people are actually dying out of eating mushrooms is a matter to investigate. We must understand what kind of mushrooms cause death and how does one get food poisoning from it, and then decide whether or not we can eat mushrooms. Just because a bunch of people accepts this fear as a *real* danger, we should not follow suit. The rule is - *Don't just follow the herd, fly like a bird.* Watch like a hawk as you flap your wings and discriminate the myth from the truth that you see below. The question is not about eating mushrooms. Some nutritionists advocate the goodness of mushrooms. It is for us to discriminate, neither ignore a claim nor blindly follow the herd of people.

The bigger challenge is when the fear of death causes hordes of people to stop dead in their footsteps. The media spreads the news that Kashmir in India is unsafe for tourism. People cancel all their plans to this exotic destination because they fear death. They don't investigate – how many people died? Out of these, how many were tourists? Is Kashmir really unsafe?

Finally, it is for us to choose and to decide. Neither should we blindly follow the herd nor should we ignorantly walk into the mouth of a crocodile. In fact, that is why we are gifted with the emotion of fear, to perceive danger. But the fear of death must not stop us from living life.

The fear of death is already a very strong, natural emotion that is inbuilt into the human mechanism. But to let a herd of people set this on fire is actually burning down our life itself. Life is a gift given to us to live. It is a short journey from birth to death. We all seek pleasure and happiness, just as we desist pain, misery and sorrow. In this quest, let us not hand over our life to several myths and fairy tales. Let us not go by a 'Chinese whisper', rather let's get to the root. Then we will enjoy the fruit of life. After all, how many more days do we have to live?

There are specialists in every field who give their opinions. Unfortunately, today, many opinions are dominated by the fear of death. And therefore, finding a genuine opinion is a challenge. For us to scan through what is good and bad, we need to first overcome the fear of death. We must build our life on the foundation of faith and courage. We must discriminate danger from fear, one is real, the other imaginary and we must not follow the herd.

CHAPTER

09

THE PARALYSIS OF FEAR

The fear of death causes Paralysis.
Fact or fiction, it stops our analysis.

Fear of death causes a paralysis. It makes us stop; it locks our thought process, puts our intellect into a coma. It disables our ability to discriminate because of its huge negative power. Consequently, we are unable to move, to act, to choose and to live. If we truly want to live life, we have to eliminate fear of death. Otherwise, we will be paralyzed by this fear and not discover this gift called life.

Fear projects a perceived danger and makes it look *real*. It scares us as it steals our faith, our hope, our trust. It corrodes our optimism and fills us with pessimism. We imagine that we are going to die, it doesn't matter what the cause of it will be. Some people think it will be an airplane crash and others, a car accident, for others, a disease. That is why the smallest symptom in our body makes us rush to a doctor because we fear it may be the beginning of a disease that will lead to death. As long as the fear acts as a warning of a perceived threat, as long as it helps us take precautions, the fear is doing good to us. But the moment the fear grows into the fear of death and stops us from living life, we are doomed.

An intelligent lady whom I know has the fear of dying in an airplane crash. The fear has paralyzed her. For 20 years, she has not taken a flight. She has missed several vacations, family reunions and opportunities to explore the world. She is not able to reason that there are millions of people flying and less than 0.18 accidents have been reported per million flights in 2019, of large commercial airplanes. Therefore, a

fatal accident is liable to happen to one in every 5 million flights or more. Then, why fear?

Some people are claustrophobic. They have a fear of closed spaces like elevators. To climb a building of 20 floors, they run up the stairs. They too are paralyzed by fear. Different fears create different types of paralysis for different people around the globe. But all fears do one thing – they rob us of our life! They steal our happiness. They kill us far before death actually does. If we don't eliminate this paralyzing fear, we are submitting ourselves to the biggest of all diseases, fear. We must let it remain only as a warning of danger because far more dangerous than the perceived danger is the paralysis caused by the fear of dying. More people are dying out of fear today than those who lie in their bed paralyzed. Fear is as common as a cough and a cold. But when the fear of death paralyzes us, this serious disease can be a real disaster.

Eliminate the fear of death or prepare yourself to be paralyzed for life. Learn to live with faith and surrender the fear of death to one who is in command of it. Live every day of your life without fear of death putting you into a coma. Otherwise, you will continue to fear death, and stop yourself from enjoying all the beauty that life has to offer, and you will die many times before death actually kills you.

CHAPTER

10

THE GIFT OF THE INTELLECT

How do you stop worrying about death and start living?
By Discrimination through the gift of the Intellect.

How do you overcome fear? How do you put the thought of death behind and start to live? By default, the mind will produce death thoughts whenever there is an imaginary danger lurking around the corner. When we use the intellect to discriminate a danger from fear, the fear will disappear. The terror of death will dissolve and will be replaced by the joy of life.

We human beings are the only unique ones who are born with the faculty of discrimination known as the intellect. Many people confuse the mind and the intellect and think they are the same. But they are two distinct faculties of our subtle invisible body. We can't see the mind or the intellect, but we know they exist. The mind is a thought factory. Its job is to produce thoughts. It is constantly producing thoughts – up to 50 thoughts a minute or 50,000 thoughts per day. The intellect doesn't produce thoughts. It is a control mechanism that can stop the thought as it forms. It can kill the thought, just as it can discriminate and choose only the positive thoughts that are good for our wellbeing.

A person whose intellect is dormant, is unable to discriminate between right and wrong. His mind is in command of his life. The mind is a thought factory. It bombards us with thoughts, and we become mere puppets which are controlled by the mind. The mind produces fearful thoughts and terrorizes us with the fear of death, and we become helpless, miserable creatures. But in a person whose mind is controlled by the

intellect, the intellect uses its faculty of discrimination. Every fearful thought is destroyed with courage and faith. Every false danger that threatens us with death, is eliminated from our system and doesn't become a roadblock in our happiness journey.

Is it that some of us are gifted with the intellect and some are not? No! We all are gifted with the intellect. Some of us develop it and make it the master. Some of us let the mind rule and it becomes a slave. Then we have no choice but to let the fear of death actually take us to our grave. When the fear of death becomes stronger, it can actually kill us. It destroys our immune system, just as it weakens our defence mechanism to face the dangers of life.

F E A R is a False Expectation Appearing Real. It imagines a thief, a snake, an insect, an animal and creates stress, worry and anxiety. A well-developed intellect will destroy fear. It will reason and replace fear with faith. It will surrender to joyous thoughts that replace fearful thoughts. We all experience thoughts that create the fear of death. It is for us to activate our intellect and eliminate this fear, otherwise we will never be able to truly enjoy our life as we live.

CHAPTER

11

THE GOAT AND THE DOG

When we just follow others, We end up like a fool.
We must use our Discrimination, Our God given tool.

When a False Expectation starts Appearing to be Real, the emotion that results is actual anxiety. The body system physically manifests the fear and causes the entire body to become limp, depressed and even paralyzed. It can cause sweating, aches and pains and affect our heartbeat. Therefore, we have to stop the fear at its source. If we follow a herd of people, then we lose our ability to choose reality and the illusion dominates our mind. People may say many things, but what they say need not be true. People's opinion about a fear doesn't necessarily mean it is a real danger.

A wise man was once asked whether it was really true that the fear of death dominates our misery, that it is imaginary and that it is mostly because we are carried away by hordes of people who are swept away by fear? The wise man demonstrated this through an interesting episode.

There was once a farmer who was walking with his goat to the weekly market. The wise man told his disciples, 'Let's go and tell this man that his dog is very beautiful'. The followers were surprised. They said, 'It's a goat, not a dog.' The wise man smiled and replied, 'Of course, we all know it is a goat. But let us experience what happens when we are brainwashed by fear.' The first man walked over to the farmer and said, 'You have a beautiful dog. Are you taking it to the market to sell?' The farmer replied, 'No. This is my goat, and I am not going to sell it.' After walking for a few minutes, another man came and told him, 'Your dog is amazing. How much are you ready to sell it for?' The farmer was confused. He looked at

his goat closely and then replied, 'My dear, this is a goat, not a dog!' And he continued walking. Another man approached the farmer and said, 'I have never seen a beautiful dog like this. Please may I buy it? I am ready to pay your price. I can offer you Rs. 2000.' By now, the farmer started doubting himself and even started believing his goat to be a dog. Soon, crowds appeared around him and a bunch of people started offering the farmer as if it was an auction, 'I am ready to pay 3,000, I am ready to pay 5,000.' Finally, a person said that he would pay Rs.10,000 for the amazing dog. The farmer announced, 'Done! I sell my beautiful dog to this man for 10,000.'

Just then the wise man entered and gave the farmer one hard whack on his back, 'Your goat costs only Rs.500 and you think us to be fools to consider it a dog and pay 10,000?' The farmer sheepishly took his goat and went away. But the wise man had taught his followers, who had surrounded the villagers as the crowd, a lesson. When several people tell us something untrue repeatedly, we start believing it to be true. And when this is a fear and relates to death, it paralyzes us and stops us from living life. We must not blindly follow herds of people who are paralyzed by the fear of death and needlessly lose our breath.

CHAPTER

12

FEAR IS NOT DANGER

Fear is not a real danger. It's just a false alarm.
Danger may be able to kill us, but fear can't cause any harm.

As long as we think a fear to be a real danger, we are sure to be in trouble. Fear is a figment of our imagination. The mind is a naughty rascal. It creates fear so that we live with the myth and we don't realize the truth. If we discover the reality of the mind, we will destroy it and become the master of our life. The mind fights hard to keep us entangled in our fears, so there is no time to realize the truth.

A danger is real. You may be in the centre of a forest and there may be tigers around you. This is not just a fear. It is real danger. The danger is just around the corner and you would take all precautions to be safe, protected in such a situation because the danger around you is real. But what if you were taking a shower and you were alarmed by a little cockroach or a lizard? This is fear, not danger. The little creature can cause no harm. When it looks up at us, it must be terrorized by us as we would appear like dinosaurs to it! But instead, our fear makes us believe that the lizard could attack us like a dinosaur and possibly kill us!

Ultimately, most fears consciously or subconsciously are caused by the fear of death. Whether it is an insect, a disease or an accident that we fear, ultimately, we fear the resultant death that the fear is causing. When people fear a roller coaster and are horrified to step onto a joy ride, the ultimate fear is the fear of dying in that super-fast fun machine. Others are giggling and laughing and even paying huge sums of money, standing in long lines to enjoy the roller coaster ride.

They have overcome the fear and thus, there is no danger. They realize that nobody dies after a roller coaster ride. Every ride has a 'beware' sign that restricts people from particular conditions of the heart or spine from taking a ride. But the rest enjoy the thrill of entertainment. Others who are born with the fear of the super-fast thriller, live with their fear till their grave. Never have they enjoyed any amusement park ride and never will they do so because their fear of death freezes their feet to go towards the joy ride.

If we fear a roller coaster and prefer to go on a boat ride on calm waters, it's fine! But when our fears become so irrational, and we are constantly controlled by our fear of death, then we are unable to truly live and to truly enjoy life. It may be a particular phobia that stops our journey and for others, it may be a bunch of fears that destroys their ability to live. When we learn to differentiate a danger from a fear, then we will take precautions but not panic. We will put on our seat belts and we will have the courage to walk into an aircraft. We will wear a mask, but not lock ourselves in our homes because we know that our fear is not a real danger. There may be a tiny element of risk, but life is all about risks. If we fear that we will be killed by a zooming car, we will not even step out of our homes.

CHAPTER

13

WHY WERE WE GIFTED THE EMOTION OF FEAR?

The Emotion of fear is a gift to man,
To save him from a real danger, not lock him in a can!

Every human being is gifted with a special emotion to warn him of a perceived danger. When a danger is arriving, a human being can sense through his sense perceptions something that is going to cause him suffering or even death. Therefore, when we are at the edge of a cliff and the fall is hundreds of meters below, an inner control mechanism stops us from taking a step forward. This is positive fear. This is the real reason why fear was fitted into the design of a human being. Therefore, fear is a gift to protect us and to save us from certain disasters. When a fierce looking dog growls at us and indicates an attack, fear makes us withdraw. If somebody ignores the fear and takes his hand close to the mouth of the dog, he will certainly be bitten. Fear gives us a signal to beware, to step back and to withdraw from a real danger.

Unfortunately, fear has lost its real purpose and its significance. We fear perceived dangers which in reality are not going to harm us, and we let the positive emotion of fear itself become a cause of our suffering. Instead of saving us from disaster, fear becomes the cause of our stress, our worry and our anxiety. It locks us into our defence mechanism even when there is no enemy in sight, only because of our false imaginary fear.

Because we do not use the gift of fear effectively, fear stops us from the excitement of life. It blocks us from several activities which would otherwise make life so fulfilling. But we are unable to move forward because of a false alarm of a danger

where there is none. Imagine people not learning to swim because they fear they will drown. Millions of people swim, and it is safe once you learn to swim. Yes, when you are in the middle of deep ocean waters, you may choose to swim with a life jacket for that added comfort because of the depth of the water and unpredictable waves. But letting fear trigger a sign of danger and not letting us learn to swim is a sign of the negative influence of fear. In fact, not learning to swim is a bigger danger in case one is confronted with a situation where one is forced into the water. The inability to swim is going to lead to certain death.

Therefore, we must eliminate fear and face it. We must do the things we fear for the fear to disappear. It is always good to take precautions when fear triggers a danger alarm. But to give up the beauty of life just because of a false fear is a pity! Some people fear paragliding from the top of a beautiful scenic mountain. Although there is a licensed pilot to manoeuvre the flight, fear makes them freeze before the take-off. The fear of death by falling off the parachute stops them from living a life of adventure, of excitement, and of bliss. Fear blinds us from the truth that eventually we have to die. While we should take the required precautions, our fears must not stop us from living life. Otherwise, instead of fear being a positive emotion, a gift of protection, it becomes a ghost that is constantly reminding us of death.

CHAPTER

14

DEATH IS CERTAIN

Anybody who is born on earth must die.
Don't look up at the sky, don't ask 'Why?'

Every living organism has a life span. For human beings, it may be 70-80 years and could go up to 100. For dogs, between 10 to 20 years. Some turtles live for over 120 years. Certain trees are said to live between a few hundred to a few thousand years. But one thing is certain – Death! Every living organism born, must die. Every 'body' that lives, must reach the end. If death is certain, then why should we fear it?

There was a patient who was suffering from cancer. The patient was paranoid about death and cried to the doctor, 'I am too scared to die!' The doctor had a good sense of humour. He said, 'Me too,' and smiled. The patient immediately asked the doctor, 'What disease do you have?' The doctor replied, 'None, my health is perfect. But one day, I too have to die. So why should I cry?' The patient was inspired by the attitude and tried to change her paradigm of life.

Most people are very scared of death. Although they know that death is certain, they are unable to accept it. They live with the fear of death for reasons unknown and lose the gift of life. Every day, the lurking fear of death follows them like a shadow wherever they go. All the time they are worried that they may die. This fear of death stops them from living with peace and joy. Although they know that death is not in their hands, that nobody can be sure when the moment of death will arrive, they keep thinking about it instead of putting it aside and enjoying life.

We have a choice. We can live with the constant fear of death or we can be constantly happy, and live with joy, humour and make life exciting. It is up to each one of us. There is no doubt, whether we live with the lurking fear of death or with the enthusiasm of life, death is going to come one day. We can't escape it. Even the millionaires and billionaires can't escape death, nor can the Presidents or the most powerful people, the saints or seers of the world. No human being, no insect, no animal, no plant can escape death. But while the other species are not blessed with an intellect, the human being is intelligent and can choose to live fearlessly. When we don't make this choice, we become no better than animals who also fear death.

Instead of living in constant worry and anxiety about dying, we can, instead, spend our time understanding death – what is the meaning of death, what happens after death? By contemplating death, we will be inspired with the true meaning of life, and the realization about life and death, together, will help us overcome all our fears and lead us to live a life of meaning and purpose. This is to truly live. Once we understand that FEAR is a False Expectation Appearing Real and we realize we can't escape death, we will overcome the fear of death and we will start to live.

CHAPTER

15

CAN ANYBODY STOP DEATH?

You can overcome the fear of death,
But you can't overcome death.

Nobody can stop death. Although the whole world mourns the death of a dear one, the world has not been able to find a method to stop death from happening. It seems almost certain that science cannot discover a secret to make a living organism immortal.

Even the best medicine in the world, the best hospitals and equipment, cannot eliminate death. No doubt the life expectancy of a human being varies and is low in a country like Africa and high in a country like Japan. This variation in life expectancy is related to lifestyle. But no lifestyle of any sort can save us from death.

No medicine can make us immortal. No exercise can postpone death indefinitely. Death has always been a mystery beyond the understanding of science and the new discoveries of biotechnology. Death doesn't always give a warning. It suddenly strikes though there are times after the life span of a person is over, that death signals it is coming. But when death will actually come and when our breath will stop, cannot be predicted by man. Not only are we unaware about when death will happen, we also have no clue as to how we will die. We may die due to a disease or a plane crash or just because of old age. Sometimes, we are baffled by the death of a young person who suffered no disease and who was young and vibrant. When it is time to go, we have got to go. We cannot request death to give us a few days or even a few moments.

While nobody can stop death from striking, so also, nobody can stop us from living. We have the freedom, a choice to live. Sadly, instead of living and making the best of life, we constantly live with the fear of death and we die. We don't realize that death will come when it has to, that death is not in our hands and that there is no need to fear death. Because we are ignorant about death and its occurrence, we develop fear, and our ignorance grows to completely envelop us.

We can't pay the best physician or surgeon tons of money to postpone death or to enhance life. Who hasn't heard of the tragic death of Alexander the Great who was in his early thirties, but was bitten by a malaria mosquito? He offered the royal physician all the money he wanted, was willing to give up his palace and his possessions in exchange for his life. But he died! Even the most powerful person in the world cannot stop death from happening. Therefore, one should have the courage to live and leave behind the fear of death. Death is a part of the Creator's design to make life on earth continue. Because there is death, there is birth. It is a cycle. But we don't understand the true meaning of it. We get carried away by the fairy tales that we are taught, and the truth eludes us. Instead of worrying about how we can stop death, let us find a way to eliminate the fear of death and let’s start to live.

CHAPTER

16

WHAT IS DEATH?

Death is a phenomenon that happens on earth.
It is a certain end for one who takes birth.

If one tries to define death, it is the permanent, irreversible end of all functions of a living organism. An inevitable process that must eventually occur for any living creature who is born. To understand death, it is different from sleep, wherein one loses Consciousness to later wake up and continue as the same person that one was before sleeping. It is also different from coma, where the body is biologically alive, breathing, but there is a cessation of all its functions.

The best way to understand death is to compare it to life. When we are alive, we breathe, walk, talk, eat, digest, reproduce and we grow. The moment we die, everything stops. A reverse cycle occurs. The body starts to decompose, and it returns to its 5 elements from which everything is formed. The fire or power inside us departs, the air escapes, the water evaporates, the space shrinks and ultimately, what is left is nothing but a little earth. The very thought of death creates fear. The end of life is considered to be tragic. We dread losing breath because along with death comes the loss of all that is known to us and more horrifying, the fear of the unknown that lies beyond death.

But can we do anything about it? Death is a reality, a certainty and nobody can escape it. It is only a matter of time. We don't know when we will die, but eventually, one day, we have to die. So why fear death? Those who understand the real meaning of death, don't mourn it. They learn to accept death gracefully and live peacefully every day that they live,

without the constant fear of death.

Because death is dreaded, contemplation will make us realize that all our fears are in essence ultimately connected with the fear of death. Whether it is the bite of a mosquito, a virus or an accident, the fear is not the bite, not the cough and cold, not the breaking of our bones, but the possible death that can occur due to the situation. Thus, we fear the situation, because we fear that it will ultimately cause death and we fear death.

As long as we fear death, as long as we don't overcome our ignorance about death, as long as we don't know who dies and what happens after death, we will constantly live with the fear of death and suffer. Even though death will come once, only once, we will constantly die every day that we live, as we worry and anticipate the monster called death.

A very few people go in quest to understand the truth about death. They realize that only the body dies and that it is not 'game over' for them. They continue in a life beyond death as they realize that the end is just a bend. While the body dies, and they, the ones who were alive, leave the body and depart to another destination. When we Realize the Truth about death, we overcome the fear of death and we start to live.

CHAPTER

17

WHO CONTROLS DEATH?

There are two things that we do not control on earth.
We do not control our death, we do not control our birth!

Most of us do not realize that death is not in our hands. It is not even in the hands of a murderer, a tiger, a reptile, a virus, an airplane or a dinosaur. Death is in the hands of the Divine. And while we have no clue about who this Power is, where and what it is, we know beyond doubt that there is a Universal Power that controls everything on earth.

How does the universe unfold day after day? The sun rises, people wake up, the birds fly and sing in the sky, as plants create enough oxygen for us to breathe and to live. How does all this magic unfold? What makes us breathe and who creates the food we eat? Who makes the world go round and round, exactly once in 24 hours, as seasons change in one cycle of revolution around the sun? Who has caused the Law of Gravity that pulls things down to the earth and makes us walk on our feet? Otherwise, we would not be walking, but flying above the street! Who ensures that apples don't grow on mango trees? Who creates the entire order and discipline that exists on earth? There is a Power. We don't know who, where and what the Power is. But beyond doubt, there is a Power.

We human beings think we are born on our birthday, but in reality, our mother will tell us we were alive in the womb when we kicked. Science will endorse that an embryo is very much alive, days before our birth. Weeks before, our organs are already formed and months before we are delivered, we can see the shape of a baby, when we scan the body. It seems

that our journey started the moment two cells had a successful fusion to become one, about 9 months before we actually arrived crying and screaming on earth.

Who caused our birth? Did you decide whether you will be male or female, Indian, American or British, born in a family that was rich or poor? Did you decide how you would look and what circumstances you would be born in, in which city and in which religion? We have no control over our birth. While most people do not understand that there is a systematic logic in our birth and they think of it to be some Divine magic, luck, faith, serendipity, whatever you call it, they don't realize that nothing happens by chance. It is all a well synchronized and coordinated master plan of a Power beyond human comprehension.

Just like birth is not in our control, death is in the hands of that Power. We don't control death. Some people have attempted suicide many times, but if it is not meant to be, they lie in a hospital bed, years after they fall off a skyscraper. Unless we realize the truth about death and the Power that controls our life, we will continue to be paranoid about death and the fear of 'The End' will stop us from enjoying this beautiful gift of life. When will we realize the truth?

CHAPTER

18

IGNORANCE ABOUT DEATH

Although we are very certain that every 'body' will die,
We are very uncertain about what lies beyond death.

We all know the meaning of death, don't we? And it seems strange to say that we are ignorant about death. But the truth is that we know nothing about death.

We have no clue about what causes death. We know that a person can die with a serious disease, an accident or even old age. But sometimes, a diseased person continues to live for years, while a healthy young person suddenly dies, and people are unable to comprehend what happened. Death can come without warning, without a distinct signal. No doubt, a sick man may feel he is going to die soon, but nobody has a clue about when he will actually die.

Not only are we unsure when death will occur and how death will happen, we also don't know who is in command of death. Some of us believe that there is a God sitting in heaven who decides our death, while others believe that death is predestined, and it depends on our Karma. This adds to our list of 'What I don't know about death'.

The biggest ignorance about death, however, is what lies beyond death. What will happen to me after my death? My body will be cremated. Will I feel the pain as the fire burns my bones and skin till it destroys everything within? If not cremated I will be left to the worms under the soil in my coffin. Once the body returns to dust, is it the end or is there something beyond the death of the physical body?

All this ignorance about death causes fear. We dread the very thought of death because of the pain, the anguish, the separation it creates. We have no clue whether there is a heaven or hell and if they exist then where exactly are they? We blink when we think about who will go to heaven and hell after the body returns to dust. We shudder as we think further about the mystery of death.

What do most people do? They prefer to ignore death. They prefer not to discuss it, not to read about it, understand and investigate clearly what death is. However, this does not change the reality that death will happen, and nobody can escape it. Just because the ignorance of death lets us be in bliss, it does not ensure happiness. Unless we realize the truth about what death is, we will continue to exist, but we will not truly live because deep within us, the fear caused by the ignorance about death will continue to haunt us.

When we go in quest to understand death and we overcome our ignorance about death, we realize the truth about what death really is. We come to understand what death is, who actually dies, what actually happens after death, and this liberates us from the fear of death. Instead of death being the cause of our misery and suffering, it becomes a new inspiration to live a life of values and ethics, creating good Karma that will ensure a fortunate next life. For the few who are Enlightened, it becomes a celebration as they are liberated and united with the Divine.

CHAPTER

19

WHO DIES?

Who is the one who actually dies?
When the body returns to dust, who flies in the skies?

No doubt we will die, but who is the one that will die? The world understands that everything will be dead – the body, the mind, the ego, the heart, the Soul. The name that was alive will die, but will continue to live as memory after death. Because we are ignorant about the truth, memories of the dead continue to linger as we imagine that they are still around us, they have become angels and are watching over us, they have been transported to heaven and they are enjoying their life there or they have become ghosts and they will return to haunt us. Unless we realize the truth about death, we will not only be ignorant about it, but we will also suffer.

Today, there is something known as clinical death. This is a medical term that indicates there is no breathing and blood circulation, the criteria needed to sustain the life of a human being. However, a person is still not pronounced or declared dead. Doctors will fit a ventilator on a person and make him continue to live, although he is as good as dead, with the hope that he will revive and come alive. While the medical world is still confused about death and struggles to define what it is, we really have no clue about who actually dies. We are paranoid about death because we will lose all that belongs to us, and we will have to depart from this beautiful world into the world of the unknown. But in reality, who is the one who departs?

What do we say when somebody dies? We say, 'This is the mortal remains. The person who was alive departed, passed

away, expired, moved on.' The fact of the matter is that the body is right here in front of us. 'Oh, no!' we are told, 'This is just the dead body.' Then we say, 'Rest in peace. Let us pray for the departed Soul.' What is the meaning of all this? If at death we are sure that we are not the body that dies, then even when alive, the body is just a body, not us. If we depart at death, then who is the one who departs? Death happens in a flash, and in a moment, the life inside us leaves each of our 30 trillion cells. But we are unable to see what happens. We don't see anybody depart, but for sure we know that the one alive has left the body.

Who is the one, therefore, who actually dies? Is it the departed Soul that we talk of? Where does the departed Soul go? Does the departed Soul take another birth or is it ME, the Mind and Ego that departs at death? Because we are ignorant about who dies, we continue to live with the fear of death without accepting the reality of it, understanding what it really is and realizing the truth about death.

If we learn that death is not the end, it is only a bend that we transcend, we will start living fearlessly and will celebrate life. Let us stop to understand who actually dies.

CHAPTER

20

WHO ARE WE IN REALITY?

If the body that dies is burnt to dust,
Who are we in reality, the myth we must bust!

There is so much ignorance about who we are in reality. In fact, this is the biggest ignorance of a human being. We know everything about this world, about what happens in our outside world. We have studied about the sun, the moon and the stars and what lies in outer space. We have enough knowledge about the birds, the animals and the flowers and all that appears on earth. But we have no clue as to who we are in reality.

We know exactly how a computer functions. We know about the hardware, the keyboard, the screen, the mouse, the motherboard and we know about the software. We know that the hardware cannot work without the software, just as the software needs the hardware to operate. But don't we know that both the hardware and the software will be dead without the power supply? While we are well versed with a computer and its components, we don't realize that a human being is also made of hardware, software and a power supply, just like a computer. The hardware or the gross physical body of a human being is made up of bone and skin and all that is within. Blood, nerves, flesh, bones and bone marrow, along with the critical organs of the brain, heart and lungs and kidneys, together form the gross physical body or hardware.

We human beings also have a software. It is composed of the mind, the intellect, the memory and the ego. It is known as the inner instrument and it is the operating system of a human being. While we have organs of action that make us walk, talk,

grasp and reproduce, the directions are given from the software. The mind thinks, the intellect discriminates, the memory records and recalls as the ego identifies itself as 'I, me and mine'. The software of a human being cannot be seen unless it is fitted into the hardware. It is exactly like a computer.

While we are quite familiar with the gross and subtle part of our existence, the power supply within the human being continues to remain a mystery. While in a computer we know that the power is supplied from an electrical source or a battery, or external source of power, we have no clue what the Power in a human being is. The moment the Power inside us leaves, there is no breath, and we are pronounced dead. What is the Power inside us? It is the Spirit, the Soul or the *Atman*.

In a computer, we can charge the battery, or we can change it, or we can connect another source of power, but once the human is dead, it is 'game over' for that entity and that name. Who are we in reality? The gross body, the subtle body or the Power that departs at death? When we realize the truth, it is then that we truly start to live.

CHAPTER

21

REALIZE THE TRUTH

No doubt it is certain that every 'body' will die,
But when will we Realize the Truth –'Who am I?'

There is no doubt that everybody must die. Every birth is certain to have a death attached to it. Nobody can escape from death. But who is the one that dies? If the body is just 5 elements that will return to dust and it is not me, then what is my real identity?

Most of humanity lives in ignorance. A large chunk believes that we are the hardware – just the gross physical body. Some are fortunate. They understand they are not the bone and skin. They are the one within that is directing the body to act. They are the software that drives the body-hardware to function. They live as per the Law of Karma and their destiny will depend on the deeds they plant. Therefore, they perform good deeds trying to create good Karma so that when the body dies, they are reborn in a life of happiness and positive circumstances.

Both, the ones who think 'We are the hardware or the gross body' and the ones who think, 'We are the software or the subtle body,' continue to fear death. They live and die with the fear that they will lose all that they own – people and possessions. They also live with the fear of the unknown that lies beyond death. Some ignore death but are subconsciously paranoid about its arrival. Others fear death as it will unfold as per their sins committed in their lifetime. A very few amongst us, overcome the fear of death. They are the ones who truly live. They realize that they are not the body or the mind, but the Divine Soul. Therefore, they are fearless. They

understand that when death happens, the body will return to dust, but they are not the body. They realize that the Mind and Ego, ME is an illusion. It seems to exist but is actually caused by our ignorance. They don't fear death.

They realize the truth that they are the Divine Soul, the Power that drives the human-computer to live. When the Power departs, it causes death and there is no breath. It is this realization that they are the Divine Soul that liberates them from fear. They overcome the ignorance about death as they understand life. Although the whole world lives with the fear of death, they do not mourn death. They live in Divine acceptance, knowing that they are not the one who dies.

What liberates them from fear? The realization that everything is a cosmic illusion. Thereafter, they celebrate life. They are the ones who truly live. Becoming conscious of the truth that life is like a dream, they are liberated from all suffering. They experience the presence of the Divine all around them and they live moment by moment, in bliss and peace. To them, death is not the end and they transcend ignorance and live a tranquil life. The rest of us who are enveloped by ignorance, live in the constant fear of death, stress that makes us die every day that we live.

CHAPTER

22

THE COSMIC ILLUSION

While it appears real, this world is just a show.
It is a Cosmic Illusion – we come, and we go.

Once we realize the truth about death, that we are not the one who dies, then we transcend the fear of dying and start living.

Realization liberates us from the constant suffering of FEAR, a False Expectation Appearing Real. We take charge of our life, realizing the fact that death is certain and we can't escape it. But more importantly, everything in this world is just an illusion – a cosmic illusion.

What is an illusion? It is something that appears to be but is not. It is like a mirage in the desert, a rainbow in the sky. There is no doubt that they appear, but they are not real. So is life on earth. Most of us don't realize the truth about the cosmic illusion, that everything in this world is energy that appears as you and me. Today, even science endorses this fact, that ultimately every cell of the human being, when broken into its smallest particle, is nothing but energy. This earth is a huge stage. We are just actors, we come and we go. This is just a show. However, because we think this world is real, we suffer the fear of death. We start believing the cosmic illusion to be a reality. We get attached to our possessions and our people. When we see somebody dear die, we cry and we look up at the sky and ask, 'Why?' We don't realize that is a part of the cosmic illusion. It is a part of the humongous drama that unfolds on earth every day. Nothing is ours. We are just actors on the earth stage.

A traveller once reached the home of a Sufi Master. When he

entered, he asked, 'How come there is nothing in your house? It is practically empty, where is the furniture and all your stuff?' The Master replied with a question, 'Where is your furniture?' The surprised man said, 'I am just a traveller. I have just come and I will go.' The Sufi Master replied, 'So am I!' He was a truly Realized Soul. To him, this world was an illusion. Nothing belonged to him. It was like a dream that would finally end at death. He lived every moment of his life with joy and bliss. The fear of death did not rob his peace as he was Conscious of the truth and he lived enjoying the cosmic illusion of life. To him, birth and death were just chapters in the book of life.

Those of us who do not realize the truth about death, start believing the cosmic illusion to be a reality. We live in constant fear of death because we fear we will lose our beautiful house, our hard-earned money, our favourite car. We are troubled by the thought of losing our family and friends. Though we know that death is certain, we don't accept the reality and we suffer. We live attached to the world, not realizing it is a cosmic illusion. While we know a dream is just a dream, it is not real, we don't realize that death on earth is part of a cosmic illusion.

CHAPTER

23

WE CAN OVERCOME FEAR, WORRY, ANXIETY

Either we can live with Fear, Worry and Stress,
Or we can overcome it and enjoy Peace and Bliss.

We have a choice. We can live with the constant fear of death and refuse to accept the truth or we can realize that death is not the monster that it seems to be. It is just the way life has been designed on earth. If we realize the truth about life and surrender to the Divine plan, we can overcome the fear of death and with it, worry, stress and anxiety too will disappear from our life.

Victor lived with the constant fear of death. He would do nothing to enjoy life. Not only had he locked himself in his room for the last one year, wearing a mask, in the fear of dying from Coronavirus, he had never enjoyed life. As a youngster, he was scared of playing any sport because of the fear that he would break his head. Then, he was scared of learning to swim, because he dreaded drowning and dying. He also never went on a boat or a ship for the very same reason. He was so scared of being killed in an aircraft crash that he would not take a flight unless it was absolutely necessary. There was no question of paragliding or parasailing or even trekking up mountains. He was paralyzed by the fear of death. What did death do? It caused him to worry. The repeated thought of being killed created so much stress and anxiety that he lived like a frog in a well. This caveman-like existence is similar to the life lived by many of us, who are captured by the fear of death and who live in constant anxiety. Although his name was Victor, he was a failure when it came to living life. In fact, he never started to live. Fear killed him even before he was really born. Biologically he was alive. But isn't somebody who is living with constant fear, worry, and anxiety of death, actually dead?

Danny was the opposite. He had overcome the fear of death. He knew death would come eventually. Nobody could escape it! He did not let fear stop him from living his life. He lived with the attitude – 'I am ready to die, but till I die, I will fly in the sky!.' Danny did not fear anything. By overcoming the fear of death, he became a little reckless but at least he was living life. He would experiment with new foods and would even try eating every possible variety of mushrooms, unlike Victor who would be suspicious that every kind of mushroom was poisonous. Danny demonstrated faith, courage, hope as he surrendered his life to unfold as per the Divine Will. He believed, 'Whatever will be, will be.'

We have a choice. We can live like Victor and die, or like Danny and live. If we eliminate fear from our life, then even the fear of death will disappear. Once we differentiate between a fear and a danger, we will not fear death as the consequence of everything, and if we overcome the fear of death then we will truly enjoy our life. It is a choice and each one of us must make a conscious decision to eliminate the fear of death and live.

CHAPTER

24

OUR FEARS CAUSE OUR TEARS

Either we can live with courage and wipe away our tears, or we can be miserable and give control to our fears.

What is the main cause of misery in the world today? It is the fear of death. It may not seem so at the outset, but if one analyses this fact, one will realize the truth. The root cause of our miseries and our tears are our fears. Our fears are many. But the source of fear is ultimately the fear of death. When we realize the truth about death and we overcome the fear of dying, we are not only liberated from our fears, but also from all our tears.

Fear is a poisonous emotion. Once it enters the depth of our life, it imprisons us in all our actions. The emotion of fear will create thoughts and feelings, and we will live a fearful life. We do not realize that the essential fear within is that of death. The cause of this is our ignorance and thus we cry, without asking the question, 'Why?' We don't investigate the truth and forget to live our life with courage and confidence.

While many types of fears rule our mind, they all appear from the basic emotion of fear that develops in us. Some of us hand over our life to fear, while others hand it over to faith. One of the two emotions can dominate our life. But the moment fear does, we are sure to be miserable till we die.

We must take charge of our fears. While we cannot eliminate fear, and it is natural for us to fear when a real danger appears, we can program our mind to transcend the fear of death and by doing so, wipe away many fears and start living without tears.

Johnson was very scared to die. The emotion of fear became his base

emotion, and this led him to live a life of overprotection. He would wash his hands a hundred times a day lest he caught an infection from germs. He would check his doors to ensure they are locked at least 5 times before he slept.

He developed a kind of OCD, an Obsessive Compulsive Disorder due to his fear. When a few of his friends decided to start a business, he refused to join them because he was scared that he would die without food and shelter, if that business failed. They took the risk and succeeded. But Johnson continued with his fears and his tears.

When we eliminate the fear of death and we start living with courage, confidence, and faith, it transforms our life. It eliminates many other fears in our life and gives us the courage to live.

Unfortunately, because we believe in our fears, we continue to live with tears. We even cry when we see somebody die on a movie screen, although we realize that it is just a movie. Such is the fear of death and such is the influence of our fear. It is time to change our gear and eliminate our fear. Otherwise, we will never start to live our life.

CHAPTER

25

FEAR STEALS PEACE OF MIND

Fear is a thief. It steals our peace.
Once we let it enter, our happiness will cease.

Fear is dangerous. It may appear to be just an imaginary fear, but once it enters our life, it becomes very real. It takes charge of our thoughts and makes us constantly worry and creates anxiety. There is no real danger, but the fear makes it look like a danger. There is a tragedy that is going to befall us - this constant stress of continuous imaginary danger makes us so fearful that we lose our happiness.

Peace is the foundation of happiness. Where there is no peace, there can be no joy. When fear becomes the foundation of our life, how can we live a happy life? Especially, if it is fear of death that takes charge, we are constantly worrying about dying. In the beginning, fear appears to be just a tiny spark, but very soon, it can make us paranoid and can even become a phobia that needs medical attention.

Fear is a strong negative emotion. Emotion is nothing but 'Energy' that puts us in 'motion'. Therefore, instead of moving forward by using our intellect and overcoming the illusion of fear, we let fear enter our life and peace is made to exit.

What does any human being seek? We seek happiness. But if our life is filled with fear, happiness can just be a layer that soon disappears because deep within, fear is controlling us. Our life is made up of our beliefs, our habits, and our actions. These are controlled by our feelings and our feelings are controlled by our thoughts. If our mind is in the hands of fear, we have handed over our life to an enemy that continuously

steals our peace and stops us from living life.

Susan had a big problem because her husband Tom thought that a chicken would kill him! Tom had let the fear of death become so intense that he started to believe that he was like a worm and whenever he saw a chicken, he would run for his life. Susan took the help of a psychiatrist who took several weeks in sessions with Tom to make him understand that chickens are scared of us because we kill them and enjoy eating them. He was not what his fear imagined him to be. Slowly, his peace of mind returned, and he shook hands with his doctor and left after the final session. The next patient was being examined when with a bang, the doctor's cabin door opened and in barged Tom. The embarrassed doctor took him aside and asked him, 'What happened?' He said, 'Everything is fine.' 'Then what made you panic?' asked the doctor. He replied, 'As soon as I went out and started walking, I saw a big chicken staring at me.' 'But you know you are not a worm,' said the doctor.'Of course,' he replied, 'but I ran to save my life because I know the fact that I am not a worm, but does the chicken know?' Fear can make us like lunatics because once we lose our peace of mind, we lose the power of discrimination and become puppets to our fears.

CHAPTER

26

FEAR AND PHOBIA

Because we fear that we will die,
We let a phobia make us cry.

Haven't we heard of phobias? Different people have different phobias. But once a phobia rules our life, we just cannot escape from it. It makes one extremely irrational as the false fear creates such an intense terror that our life is full of panic.

Some people have a phobia of insects or lizards. Logically, we know that one need not worry about dying from these tiny creatures. But when fear becomes a phobia, it not only makes us blind, but stops us from living our normal life.

Some people have aerophobia. They fear death and stay away from flying. Others have claustrophobia – they will walk up 10 floors of a building, but not take the elevator. They even start sweating when they are in a room without a window. But fears are not real dangers. When we make them a part of our life, they manifest in our day-to-day living. Some people fear that they will die while doing a root canal procedure. This dentophobia keeps them away from the dentist for years. Others fear doctors because of latrophobia and their blood pressure goes up just seeing a stethoscope or an injection in the hands of the nurse.

It doesn't matter which phobia rules our life, but when fear becomes extreme and irrational, we start imagining death. If it is not lizards, a virus or aeroplanes, it may be some other thing that creates a phobia.

Stuart developed hemophobia. The moment he saw blood, he would

become terrorized. Once when he was snorkelling, he touched a coral that cut his foot. His phobia of blood made him imagine that he would drown and die. Luckily, his friends who were with him, saved him from the disaster.

Fears are irrational. They stop us from using our logic. They make us worry to a point that we continuously start thinking of death. Even though this may not be consciously visible to us, phobias are in command of our subconscious mind. Therefore, when we are trekking, we often imagine that a snake will appear from the bushes or behind the trees.

Today, the world is living with Corona phobia. The phobia of the virus has not just created fear in people but has terrorized governments of most countries. Nobody is living in the fear of the virus, but everybody is living in the fear of death that it may cause. The moment somebody coughs or sneezes, the mind thinks, 'Covid!' and though a tiny fraction of people have died due to Coronavirus, the phobia it has created has stopped normal life like never before. For the first time in 100 years, this phobia has shut down the entire world, not for a day or a few weeks, but for the entire year. If we let a phobia take charge of our life, then, we lose our biggest gift of life and instead of living, we die every day that we live.

CHAPTER

27

FEAR OF DISEASE KILLS MORE PEOPLE THAN THE DISEASE ITSELF

More people die of the fear of disease than of disease itself – Mahatma Gandhi

What did Mahatma Gandhi mean when he said that the fear of the disease is more dangerous than the disease itself? He meant that while a disease causes us pain and suffering, fear of dying from the disease becomes a larger cause of losing our ability to battle death. Today, doctors prescribe not just medicines, but faith, courage and hope to build their patients' immunity. It is no secret that the enemy, Fear, can destroy the body's immune system and let the disease take control of us.

It is not only a glitch in the hardware that can adversely affect a computer, but even some problem in the software can make it crash, similarly, the human-computer can be affected both by body and mind. Disease may affect the body, but fear destroys the mind. Therefore, one must not let the fear of being diseased cause our death.

A middle-aged lady in Mumbai recently got the Covid. She was quite healthy and had fever, cold and cough. In one of those rare cases, her lungs got affected and she was on a ventilator. The doctors were confident that she would recover, but because Covid is contagious, she was not allowed to meet anybody for a few days. Her family got very concerned because it seemed that fear had gripped her. When they spoke to her on a video call, she said that she was fed up. She had pulled out all the tubes from the ventilator. Somehow, she felt she would die, and she died.

This real story is a sad reflection of how fear can actually kill. She needed the medication and the ventilator, but because

fear had overtaken her, she lost hope and gave up. Death is certain. We will all experience it one day. But when we live with fear, we only hasten the moment of death. More dangerous than the disease, we must realize, is fear, but stronger than any virus or cancer is our faith, courage, confidence and trust. However, once we lose this, we lose life itself.

We must realize that a human body will experience diseases and there will be viruses, accidents and several other causes of death. If one doesn't die of a disease, then one will ultimately die of old age. Just because many people die in their sleep, will you stop sleeping? We must learn to face life, face a disease and face our fear. We must eliminate fear and live with faith, only then will we be able to fight the disease, both externally through medication and internally, through positive thinking. If we do not overcome the fear of death due to disease, we will constantly imagine the disease will kill us and we will be dead far before we die. We will suffer far more pain and misery due to our fear than due to the disease itself.

We must kill fear before fear kills us. We must realize that far more dangerous than any disease is the disease called fear. While we may be able to escape from a disease, we cannot escape from fear once we make it a part of our life.

CHAPTER

28

WHY USE A CANNON TO KILL A MOSQUITO?

Don't use a Cannon to kill a Mosquito - Confucius

The fear of death steals our gift of discrimination. It eliminates our ability of logical thinking as we consider the wolf to be far bigger than it actually is. We imagine that we will die, and the fear of death makes us use a cannon to kill a mosquito! We are so scared of the rat that we bring down the house to kill it. What does this do in the bargain? It lets the fear of death dominate our life and alas, we forget to live!

There was once a man who was captured by the fear of death. He would not leave his house without an umbrella, a raincoat, a jacket, a water bottle, a thermometer and a bag of other things. He lived in constant fear and his life got consumed by his fear. When he was reaching the end of his life, he stopped and reflected. Because of his fear and his cautious approach in life, he had not discovered life.

One day, somebody asked him, 'What do you regret not having done in life?' He replied, 'If I had a chance to live my life all over again, I would live by climbing more mountains, watching more sunsets, catching more butterflies, going snorkelling, paragliding and windsurfing, and a host of other things. I cannot rewind my life to relive it. I have lost the greatest gift I had. I was so scared of death that I ended up life living my fears and not my dreams. However much I could say I would have, I should have, I can't! I realize now that nobody can escape life alive, that the destination of life is death. I wish, I had killed the fear of death and lived a life of my dreams.'

Those who are controlled by the fear of death are unable to take a chance, they are unable to take a risk and tie their little

boat of life on the shore. Their life gets over, but they never discover the ocean. They imagine their fears to be real dangers when the truth is that they are not. Instead of controlling their fears, they let their fears control their life and the fear of death stops them from living life.

They realize that death is certain. Nobody can escape it. But they don't go in quest to understand the true meaning of life and death. On the journey of life, we must live and cherish each moment as it unfolds. Every moment is a gift to us. But what we actually do with this gift called life is what we return to the One who blessed us with this gift of life.

But the fear of death makes us a prisoner of ME – the Mind and the Ego. It doesn't make us realize the truth of who we truly are and stops us from living a life of fearlessness, of peace, of joy and of bliss. If only we overcome the fear of death by realizing the true meaning of life, we would be able to enjoy every moment that we live, and not reach the end with regrets.

The fear of death is so dangerous that it kills us far before the actual moment of death arrives. We are so busy battling death in our minds due to fear, that before we realize it, our life comes to an end. If only we stop and realize the truth about death, our fear will disappear and the fear of death will not stop us from living life.

CHAPTER

29

DEATH IS NOT THE END, IT'S A BEND

Most of us think death is the end.
We don't realize that it is just a bend to transcend.

Death is not the end. It is just a bend in the journey called life. The body dies, but the one who was alive in the body departs and moves on. How can one realize this truth about life?

Life is like a drama that is unfolding on earth. The earth is a big stage. We are just actors, we come and we go. When we are born, we enter the earth stage and at death, we leave the stage after completing our role. Just like every actor changes his clothes and goes back home, we too change our body at death and continue onwards. Death is not 'The End'. It is just a bend. Those who don't realize that this world is a theatre, live and die, without a life philosophy that will create a destiny of their choice. They don't realize that they are not the body that dies. They don't realize that they are just actors that come on the earth stage to perform their role in this life.

Some of us are fortunate to realize the truth about this drama called life on earth. We realize that at the end of life, when death causes a bend, we drop the body but we continue in a new life being reborn in a new body. Just like actors finish one role and take up another, we realize that at death, we drop one body and based on our Karma, our past actions, we are reborn in a new body. We return to the earth stage in a new role, to perform a new act in the drama called life. Not everybody is blessed to realize that death is not the end, and there is life beyond the bend called death. Those who realize this, live a virtuous life, being kind and compassionate, avoiding what they consider as sin, living with ethics and

morals. They believe in God, pray and realize that they cannot escape from their deeds. Their deeds become the seeds that they plant in this life. When the moment of death arrives, like seeds germinate, their deeds will bear fruit in a new life, in a new role as they are reborn in a new body.

Those who realize that death is not the end, realize that each life is like a chapter in the book called life. It is not the book itself, one chapter leads to the next and to the next. The book of life continues and as each chapter is over and we turn the pages, so also at death, we turn to a new chapter of life. No doubt it is the 'The End' for the body and for the entity that was alive. The one who had a name and who believed that he was the owner of his possessions, will face the end. All earthly relationships come to an end, but the one who was alive takes a bend, transcends and moves on.

Many people zoom down the road of life, seeing a dead end. They don't see a bend and thus, they live and they die, blind to the facts. They lose the opportunity to transcend, to evolve, to grow and to be ultimately liberated when the moment of death arrives. It is the fear of death that makes them blind and they do not realize the Ultimate Goal of life.

CHAPTER

30

CYCLE OF LIFE

The cycle of life goes on and on.
Once we are dead, we must be reborn.

Most of us do not understand the cycle of life and death. Therefore, we continue to live with the fear of death, thinking that death is the end. We fear the loss of everything that belongs to us due to our ignorance about the fact that nothing ever belongs to us. We come without anything and we go without anything. Have we seen anybody taking something with them when they die? Although we know the fact, we don't realize the truth. We continue to cry when we see somebody die.

Our ignorance about the life cycle makes us attached to people whom we love and the fear of losing them, makes us miserable. Our ignorance stops us from realizing that all of our relationships will come to an end. While the cycle of life will continue to go on and on, the relationships that we create after we are born, have to end before we are gone. When we realize this truth, only then can we truly start to live life.

Because of our deep ignorance about the circle of life that never ends like the river merges with the sea, we continue to live with the fear of death. We imagine all kinds of things that will happen after death. We read fairy tales about going to heaven and hell, although we see the body disintegrate into dust on earth. Because we don't understand the cycle of life, the fear of death, the fear of loss of the known, and the fear of the beyond that is unknown, stops us from truly living life.

The cycle of life is very simple. The body dies and return to

dust, but the one who was alive in the body departs, like they say, 'From dust, we come and unto dust, we will go'. Don't we know that the body is formed in the mother's womb after the fusion of two cells that unite to become a zygote? Then, it grows into an embryo, and we are ultimately born on earth. We grow up, we live, and we die. The body is cremated or buried. Is there any doubt about this part of the cycle of life? Can anybody deny the truth about death and dispute the fact of how we are born? There is no possibility to deny the truth about life and death. The reason we fear death is because we don't know the cause of our birth and what lies beyond death. We understand only half the cycle of life. We do not realize the truth that at death, we continue the journey till we are reborn on earth. We ask for proof, instead of using inference to understand the complete cycle of life and death. We have understood clearly that a sunset is not the end of the sun. When a new day is born, the sun rises, and the cycle of day and night continues. Because we don't realize that after the sunset of death, there will be a sunrise of life in a new body, we continue to live with the fear of death and our own ignorance stops us from truly living life. So, does this cycle go on and on? We will all die and we will all be reborn? Those who discover this truth are free from the fear of death. They start to truly live.

CHAPTER

31

THE TWO POSSIBILITIES AT DEATH

If we realize we are the Soul, we are liberated at death.
If not, our ME, the Mind and Ego, in a new body gets breath.

What actually happens at death? The body dies and it returns to dust. Can anybody deny this? Either it is cremated, or it is buried. In both cases, its journey is over. But only the body dies. What about the one who was alive in the body? The one who was alive departs at death. That is the moment it is pronounced, 'John is no more, or John has moved on'.

Two questions remain unanswered: who has departed and where have they gone? A large chunk of humanity doesn't even bother to answer this question. They live and die. For them, it is 'game over!' But those who truly want to live, do not secretly suffer their fears, ignoring the mystery of death. They go on to enquire and realize that only their body dies at death, that they have to settle all their past Karma. To settle the past deeds, both good deeds and sins, there is no other possibility but for them to be reborn in a new body. When they see a baby born blind in one instance, or in the lap of luxury in another, they realize this is not just fate or some random wish of God. They realize that this is the Law of Action and Reaction that is unfolding life after life. They realize that just as the seeds we plant cause the fruits on the tree, the deeds we plant create our destiny. Such people live a good life because they do not want to suffer in their rebirth. Thus, their actions indicate their belief in the Law of Karma, and they work towards a good next life.

While there is no proof about all this, just like the Law of Gravity, we infer the moment of death to be the departure of

the one who has died. Otherwise, we would wake up just as we wake up after we sleep every night. But at death, we leave our body permanently and move on. The cycle of death and rebirth continues, and this causes the show on earth to go on generation after generation. Even if our life is full of good deeds, we will return to earth by rebirth to be rewarded.

A very few amongst us realize that we are not the body that dies. We are not even the one who takes rebirth, the ME – the Mind and the Ego. We are the Divine Soul. Those of us who are fortunate to realize that we are the Divine Soul, are liberated from the cycle of rebirth and are united with the Divine. This is the second possibility at death. Not many people can understand this. Even though they may have the knowledge of it, they do not realize it. It is due to our not realizing that we are the Divine Soul, that most of us return to earth in a new body, after we die.

Then why do we fear death? Because we realize that whoever is born on earth has to suffer and we imagine the pain at death, and the suffering that lies beyond death. The imagination of the miserable event called death robs us of our blissful life. While we cannot escape death, we can definitely realize the truth of death and beyond and eliminate the fear of death from our life.

CHAPTER

32

DEATH AND BEYOND

What is the mystery that lies beyond death?
What actually happens after our last breath?

There is no mystery about the fact that we will die. The Power of life in each of our 30 trillion cells departs in a flash but nobody has been able to decode this mystery. If I ask you to close your eyes and see me through your nose, can you? Just like the nose cannot comprehend sight, human beings have not been given the ability to see beyond death. However, we have been given an intellect. If we use our power of discrimination, we can be sure beyond doubt that the body dies and disintegrates. Therefore, to imagine that the person goes to heaven or hell is just a fairy tale. Heaven and hell do exist, but they are right here on earth. We experience either heaven or hell when we take rebirth based on our Karma, our past sins or good deeds.

We know we are the Soul, the Power that departs at death. But because of our ignorance, we return to earth to settle our previous Karma. This cycle is visible to our eyes. The cycle goes on and on. But the unknown mystery is what lies beyond death. This is what causes us to fear death and beyond.

Why do we fear pain at death? Don't we see that a dead body has no senses and is incapable of feeling pain? Why are we aghast at the thought of being cremated or being lowered in the soil to become food for the worms? Because we do not use our intellect, we do not realize that there is no pain beyond death. Death is the end for the body that was alive and is caused when the Soul departs. If only we realize we are that Divine Soul, death will become a celebration because we will live with the realization that death is liberation from

suffering, just as it is unification with the Divine.

When we realize we are the Divine Soul that is liberated at death and is united with God, all our fears disappear. The mystery of death and beyond is solved, as we realize we are neither the body that dies, nor the illusory mind and ego that seem to exist, and takes rebirth in a new body.

This realization not only liberates us from the fear of the unknown after death, but it also liberates us from all fear while we are alive. We are free from the fear of physical suffering. Although the body may experience pain, we do not suffer once we realize we are the Soul. When the mind wanders and tries to make us miserable, we do not suffer as we gently bring back the mind through the Consciousness of the truth. When the ego is about to live with hate, revenge, jealousy and anger, we resist because we are free from all such negative poisons that follow because we live as the Divine Soul. What lies beyond death, once realized, can lead to joy, bliss and peace. It can eliminate the fear of death and beyond as we live life moment by moment without any fears and more so without the fear of death constantly haunting us. We accept the reality called death and live every moment of life fully till the moment of death arrives.

CHAPTER

33

THE LAW OF KARMA

This is the Law of Action and Reaction,
'Whatever you do will come back to you.'

Doesn't the whole world believe in the Law of the Boomerang - *What goes around, comes around?* Don't the scriptures of most of the religions of the East and the West believe – *As you sow, so shall you reap?* The world has, by and large, accepted the universal law – *What you give is what you get.* What many of us have not realized is that this Law, popularly known as the Law of Karma, doesn't spare us even after death. Although the body dies, the one who was alive in that body carries their Karma or their past carried forward actions into a new birth, so that they can be rewarded for their good deeds or punished for their sins.

The Law of Karma is a practical way of believing in heaven and hell. Because the body disintegrates, nobody can actually go to a destination called heaven or hell. This is an illusion and is caused because of our ignorance. It is this fear of going to hell that makes us live a miserable life. We do not realize that the Law of Karma gives us an opportunity to settle our sins by doing good actions. Those who understand the Law of Karma, live moral lives and are not afraid of the reality of death. They surrender their life to the Creator and believe that they will be reborn as per their past Karma. They are better off than those who are ignorant about the Law of Karma, who silently tiptoe into their grave carrying the lurking fear of death at the back of their minds. Those who do not believe in the Law of Karma are either indifferent to the reality and they suffer both in the life before death and beyond. Their ignorance makes them suffer the triple suffering of the body, mind and

ego. They may ignore the Law of Karma, but Karma will not ignore them. One day when they die, they will carry their sins and return to earth in a rebirth to suffer in a hell that was caused by their indifference and ignorance.

Those who understand the Law of Karma, escape from hell. They are reborn. They experience heaven on earth in a new life based on their past actions. However, they still fear death because they have not realized the truth that they can be liberated from a possible rebirth.

Those who realize the truth about life and about Karma, are liberated from the fear of death. They go beyond the Law of Karma as they realize the Divine Soul that is birthless and deathless. They realize that they are not the body, mind and ego that creates Karma. They live as an instrument of the Divine and surrender all their actions as an offering. Because they are not creating any new Karma, they do not have to be reborn on earth. Their Realization also liberates them from all past Karma. Only a very small fraction of humanity is blessed to understand the A to Z of Karma. They are the ones who are liberated from death and beyond. They celebrate every moment of life, living as a Realized Soul. The rest of us will come back to earth and take rebirth based on our Karma.

CHAPTER

34

KARMA AND REBIRTH

Why fear death? There is going to be a rebirth.
Whatever our deeds, we will return to earth!

What is the point of worrying about death? One day we have to face it. Nobody can escape it. But we can escape rebirth if we realize the truth of who we are and why we are here. We must be absolutely clear about the Law of Karma and how we all are going to come back to settle our past deeds. The universe unfolds every day based on the Karmic Law and once we are involved in the cycle of Karma, rebirth is inevitable, just as death is.

The body will die. We must accept the reality. Yesterday, I met a man who seemed to be in his seventies. He had a smile on his face, but surprisingly, his daughter who was in her forties, sadly shared, '*My brother is battling for his life in the ICU at the Apollo Hospital. His liver has failed, and doctors have given up hope of his survival.*' The father had a peaceful look on his face. It seemed he had accepted the reality and had let fear pass by as he continued to live in surrender and faith. Could he do anything to change the situation for his son? His son was experiencing a life that was unfolding on the bed in the ICU because of his own Karma. Once the body would die, the one who was alive as his son would depart and take another birth in a new body, leaving behind the deceased body that was diseased due to liver cirrhosis.

Whether it be disease or just old age, our body must die and we must come back to the planet to suffer hell or to enjoy heaven, in a rebirth based on our Karma. Nobody can escape from the universal law.

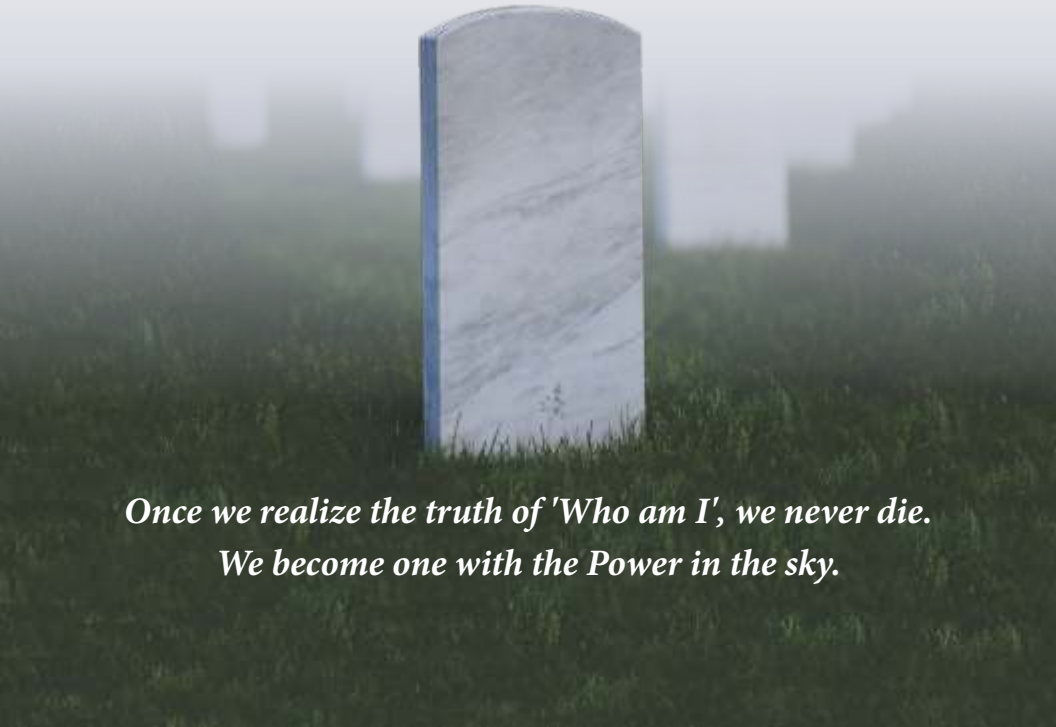
Once we realize the truth about Karma and rebirth, we work on our Karma, rather than live in the constant fear of death. We invest in our deeds which will become seeds for our next journey that must necessarily start after the present one is over. Death is a bend, it's not the end and the cycle goes on and on. Like the old man had resigned to the Divine Will and accepted the reality of death, we too must live by the Law of Karma, rather than be miserable at the thought of the arrival of death.

There are a few who overcome the fear of death completely and even transcend Karma. They are the rare ones who realize the truth and at death are liberated from the cycle of rebirth. The only way for this to happen is Self-realization and transcending Karma, being able to live as an instrument, being free *in* action, although one cannot be free *from* action. All our actions are offered to the Divine as we let go of the ego and renounce ownership of all actions. The one who lives ever-connected with the Lord and as an instrument of the Divine, is free from Karma, both of the past and the present Karma, just as one is free from rebirth. At death, he is liberated and united with the Divine. He overcomes the fear of death and joyously lives every moment of his life, despite his circumstances. He realizes his true self and knowing 'Who am I?' he overcomes all worry, living as the Divine Soul.

CHAPTER

35

WHEN WE KNOW 'WHO AM I,' WE NEVER DIE



Once we realize the truth of 'Who am I', we never die.
We become one with the Power in the sky.

Having transcended Karma, death and rebirth, one has reached a state of Self-realization. One must accept the inevitable moment of death and surrender to it. Death will come when it has to. Why worry about it? Such people live every moment of life, without the slightest fear of death. What makes them do so?

Once we realize we are not the body that dies, and we realize we are not even the ME, the Mind and Ego that will take rebirth, we realize we are the Divine Soul. The Soul is birthless and deathless. It gives Power to our body when it is a tiny zygote as it is fertilized and starts its journey in the womb of our mother. One day, the Soul, the Power that is our real existence, will leave the mortal body and move on. When we realize we are this Divine Soul, then we never die. When the body dies, we transcend Karma, as we overcome ignorance and realize we are not the Mind and Ego, ME that creates Karma through the body it occupies.

Once we realize we are not the ME, the Mind and Ego, then there is no rebirth because then there is no Karma. We, the Realized Soul, drop all our Karma like a bag of stones in an ocean. We let go of all our past Karma, as we are liberated and free from the cycle of death and rebirth.

Once we are free from the cycle of death and rebirth, we overcome the fear of death so completely, that we live as a fearless Soul embodied in a body-mind complex. We realize the truth – Who

am I. We realize that we will never die, just as we realize that the body cannot escape the moment of death. Those who do not realize that they are the Soul, carry their Karma as the Mind and Ego, ME and are reborn in a new body, life after life. If such people have lived a good life, they have less fear of death. They look forward to a rebirth that will be full of Joy. But those who have sinned, dread the thought of death. They fear that they will be punished in an imaginary hell or in a rebirth that will make them suffer. Whatever be our state, whoever is born on earth in a body-mind complex, suffers the triple suffering of body, mind and ego. They experience fear as they live, and they die. Only the Realized Soul who knows, 'Who am I', completely overcomes the fear of death and celebrates life. Such a person says, '*Please do not cry when I die! For when the body will die, I will be free as I fly in the sky to become one with the Divine, who in reality, is the one that is 'I'.*'

Such a Realized Soul overcomes the fear of death, transcending Karma and rebirth. The liberated one lives with only one goal – to be liberated from the cycle of death and rebirth and to be united with the Divine. Such a person is blessed to live a life without any fear of death. They overcome the fear of death and joyously live in Divine Surrender every moment of their life.

CHAPTER

36

OUR ULTIMATE GOAL, LIBERATION

What is the Ultimate Goal of life?
To be liberated, to be free from fear, worry, and strife.

Most of us live and we die, without realizing the truth of 'Who am I'. Although we achieve success, we live in the constant fear of death because of our ignorance. As long as we don't realize 'Who am I', it is but natural to fear the thought that I will die. However, when we realize that I am not the body that dies, much of our fear disappears. When we further realize, we are not even ME, the Mind and Ego, that flies when the body dies, to take rebirth on earth, it is then we are liberated from the fear of death. We realize that death is just like a sunset. As the sun appears to set somewhere on earth, it appears to rise somewhere else. If we live as the ME, the Mind and Ego in the body, then at death, there will no end, but there will be a bend and we will have to take a U-turn to return to earth to settle our Karma, or past actions.

Because it is inevitable for anybody who comes to earth to suffer, the Ultimate Goal of human life is to escape from the cycle of death and rebirth. The Ultimate Goal is Liberation from Karma and from returning and experiencing both pleasure and pain. Our Ultimate Goal is Liberation and Unification with the Divine.

This is possible only if we overcome the ignorance of 'Who am I' and if we overcome the fear that I will die. If we realize that death is not the end, it is just a bend, and we transcend the body, mind, and ego, then we celebrate every moment of life. When we let go of the ego, just as we let go of all our past Karma, we live as an instrument of the Divine without

creating any fresh Karma. This is the only way to escape rebirth. This is the only way for us to become one with the Divine.

As long as we think we are a wave in the ocean, we will continue to splash again and again, till we finally realize we are not the wave, but we are the ocean itself that appears as millions of waves. This is Realization. Realization leads to Liberation from rebirth. Liberation leads to Unification, becoming one with the Divine.

Because we do not realize this truth, we continue to splash in the ocean called life, living with the constant fear of death. We fear our end, because of our ignorance and although we live, we actually die every day that we live. Such is the power of fear. But to the one who has achieved the Ultimate Goal of life, who has overcome his ignorance, and realized the truth of who he really is, he leaves behind all fear and enjoys every moment of life. Although he seems like a wave, he does not fear splashing and dying. He enjoys dancing as a wave in the ocean of life, realizing he is a manifestation of the Divine. Such a person is the one who truly lives. We too have a choice – we can fear and worry till we die, or we can blissfully enjoy life, realizing the truth of 'Who am I'.

CHAPTER

37

WHY WORRY, START LIVING

'Why worry, start living' – is a common thing people say,
But the fear of death, for sure, comes in the way.

What stops people from living, from truly making life exciting, from unnecessarily worrying? It is the fear of death.

While we have analyzed death, understood that it is certain, that nobody can escape it and that fear is not real, why do we continue to fear death every day that we live? We human beings are ignorant about the true meaning of life. We are covered by this blanket of myth and we don't realize the truth. From the time we are born, we see people mourn death, just as they are scared to even talk about it. We believe in fairy tales about going to heaven and hell, about how our Soul will become a ghost after we die. We imagine so many things about death that we just can't stop worrying about it. The fear of death stops us from truly living life.

Life is a gift. It is meant to be an exciting journey. We have to enjoy this beautiful world that God has created, but many a time, we fall short of this, because worry sits in the driver's seat. We worry that we will die and this imaginary fear, creates imaginary dangers that actually don't exist. Thus, we hold back from things that could make life fun and exciting.

Can we do anything about death? Can we stop it from happening? Can anybody escape from the moment of death? We know for sure that death is certain. It will come when it has to come. Then, why go on worrying about it? We may die tomorrow, or after 10 years or even after 50 years. But because we are living in the constant fear of death, we are as good as

dead. We worry about the loss of what we own, the relationships that are known, and we fear the unknown that lies beyond death. But death is a reality. Nobody can escape from it. Not even the king of kings or the most powerful people in the world can circumvent death.

An interesting story of Alexander the Great, the world conqueror can inspire us to live. It is said that he was bitten by a mosquito and in those ancient days, there was no cure for malaria. He offered his doctor all his wealth, his palace and everything he had if only he could save him from death. But, in 323 BC, at age 32, the world conqueror died in Babylon! He instructed that when his coffin was taken, his empty hands should hang outside of it, to remind people that when we die, we can take nothing with us.

Although Alexander taught us this lesson over 2300 years ago, we still worry about losing what we own, without realizing that we own nothing! When we realize this truth, then we start to overcome the fear of death, just as we start living a life of detachment, not worrying about losing our wealth and our possessions. We enjoy living with the people we love, rather than worrying about losing them when we die.

CHAPTER

38

HOW TO OVERCOME THE FEAR OF DEATH

Fear is not real, it is just a False Expectation.
When we Realize the Truth, from fear there is Liberation.

The only way to overcome fear and to start living is to realize the truth about life and death. We must accept the reality of death and the fact that we cannot escape from it. But by living with the constant fear of it, we stop enjoying our life.

We already realize that nothing belongs to us. Our possessions are temporary. When we die, we cannot even take a pin with us. We see this happening every time we see somebody die and we know for sure that nothing really belongs to us. Even the relationships that we believe are permanent, are all temporary. Every relationship breaks at death. Such is the drama of life and we can do nothing about it! So why not accept this reality and live rather than worry about losing all that is ours and fear death every day of our life?

The bigger challenge than losing what we own, and the dear people known, is the mystery of the unknown that lies beyond death. Unless we overcome the fairy tales about death, we will never be able to overcome the fear of it. Unless we realize that only the body dies, and this is unavoidable, we will continue to live with the fear of death.

It isn't that we do not know the truth of death. We all know about it, but we do not 'Realize' the truth. Our mind makes us live in the constant fear of death. It bombards us with thoughts and makes us worry about how we will be cremated or buried. The mind makes us imagine the kind of suffering we may undergo after we die and constantly feeds us negative

thoughts that make us dread the moment of death.

How do we overcome the fear of death? By accepting the reality of life and by Realization that one day we will die. We must realize that nothing belongs to us and nobody will remain with us forever. The realization of the truth about life makes us live not as the body, mind, and ego, but as the Divine Soul. It is the Realization of the truth that can liberate us from the fear of death just as it shows the way to live with joy and peace.

Some people ignore death. This is not overcoming it because subconsciously, they will still fear death. It is dangerous to just ignore death, for this will make us secretly suffer the fear of death, although we may act like we do not care about it. Every human being on earth lives with the fear of death. The only way to overcome it is to use the intellect, our instrument of discrimination, to shoot down the thoughts of the mind when it creates fearful thoughts of death. Without using our intellect, if we continue to live with the fear in our mind, we will never overcome the fear of death, just as we will never start to truly live. Let us use our intellect to realize the truth.

Remember, if we don't overcome the fear of death, the fear of death will overcome us.

CHAPTER

39

MIND VS INTELLECT

The mind is a rascal! It makes us fear death.
It constantly reminds us that we may lose our breath!

Most of us do not realize that our mind is our biggest enemy. It is our own mind that makes us imagine that we are going to die. It constantly produces thoughts, up to 50 thoughts a minute and it is these thoughts that produce fear, worry and anxiety.

Just as we seem to have a mind that is constantly thinking, we human beings are the only ones who are blessed with an intellect. It is our biggest gift as it helps us differentiate black from white and wrong from right.

When the mind makes us live with the fear of death, it is the intellect that must shoot down the thoughts of death with the understanding that death is not in our hands. When the mind creates fear that we will die, the intellect must discriminate that this is not true, it is just a FEAR, a False Expectation Appearing Real. The intellect must differentiate a real danger from fear, and take precautions when there is a need to, but not resort to panic. It is capable of doing so. But if the mind is stronger than the intellect, it will bulldoze the intellect and dominate our life. Then, we will constantly live with the fear of death and not enjoy the gift of life.

Every day, there is a war within us, the war between the mind and the intellect. If the mind wins, we become miserable, but if the intellect is stronger, then we overcome the negativity of the mind, we overcome the fear of death, just as we overcome other negative emotions and thoughts and we live a life of bliss and joy.

Most of us don't even realize that the intellect is different from the mind. We don't even realize the truth about death, about who dies, about what happens after death. Unless we use the power of our intellect, we will never realize we are not the body that dies. We will never realize that our biggest enemy is ME, the Mind and the Ego. Together, the mind and the ego, both a part of our subtle existence or our life software, program us to live with fear and to worry about death. Unless the intellect destroys the negative programming of the ME and discriminates the virus created by the mind and the ego, our body will continue to live with the corrupt thoughts of the fear of death. The moment the intellect defeats the mind and ego, they are destroyed and we are liberated from the fear of death. Therefore, the mind and ego fight very hard, to control the intellect, just as they force us to believe in illusions and envelop us in the darkness of ignorance, stopping us from Realizing the Truth.

Therefore, it is a choice! We can continue to live with the fear of death, in ignorance, believing in the fairy tales or we can discriminate, Realize the Truth, accept the reality of death, and start living with joy and peace. It's a choice and we can choose to be happy or unhappy. It depends on whether we make the mind or intellect the master of our life.

CHAPTER

40

ENTER FAITH, EXIT FEAR

There is a place for only one of the two,
Either Faith or Fear can be with you.

Our life is a choice. We have been blessed with the power to choose. There are some things we cannot choose like our birth and death and the circumstances that unfold as per our past Karma. We must learn to surrender and accept that. But when it comes to our present life, our thoughts, feelings, emotions, and actions, we have a choice.

Some people choose to live with fear, whereas others make it a habit to live with faith. We know that FEAR is a False Expectation Appearing Real, but FAITH is a much stronger emotion. It is Full Assurance In The Heart. When we choose Faith over Fear, we eliminate the constant fear of death that hounds us and we live with Trust, Hope, and Belief. What is HOPE? It is Having Only Positive Expectations. What is TRUST? It is Total Reliance, Unconditional Surrender to the Almighty. When we choose to live with positive emotions, then fear exits from our life. But this is a choice.

Sam made it a habit to live with fear. He handed over his life to fear and lived a miserable life with worry and anxiety. He would constantly live with the fear of death and every time there was a death, he would imagine his life too would soon end. He had no faith or hope. His friend Tom had a very similar lifestyle. They both grew up together and enjoyed similar financial conditions. But Tom was happier than Sam. His life was full of faith. He lived with trust and had no fears. The fear of death hardly troubled him. What was the difference between the two?

Fear had entered Sam's life and faith had made an exit. It is like taking an empty glass. It seems empty but it is full of air. The moment we pour water into the glass, it displaces the air and occupies the glass. Tom has displaced his fear with faith. He poured faith into the glass of his life every day and displaced all fear. He lived with such unflinching faith that the fear of death didn't even get a chance to surface. Of course, he went one step further to realize the truth of who he was and what the truth of life and death was. This helped him on his journey of living with faith over fear. Instead of living a life full of worry and fearing death, Tom chose a life full of positive emotions.

We too have a choice. We can live with fear or we can live with faith. Death is certain and it will come, but when we live with faith, we overcome the fear of death and move on with our life. We don't create phobias and are not paralyzed letting fear make us paranoid. We believe in the Power of the Divine and we surrender our life to the one who gave us this gift called life. If we don't choose to live with faith, then by default, fear will remain. We must make a conscious effort to bring in faith and other positive emotions that will eliminate fear, worry, stress, and anxiety as we push out the fear of death from our life. Remember, there is space for only one emotion in our life, FEAR or FAITH and it’s upto us to choose.

CHAPTER

41

FEAR IS THE FATHER OF NEGATIVE EMOTIONS

Fear not only creates a lot of stress,
It creates negativity and makes our life a mess.

Fear is the father of all negative emotions. It gives birth to worry, stress, anxiety and along with the ego, lives with anger, hate, revenge and jealousy.

What happens when we live a life full of fear? We constantly imagine that things are going to go wrong. We imagine that we will be infected with a disease and we will die. We imagine poverty, suffering and pain, although, at this point of time, there is none of these in our life. Fear is a very powerful emotion that has been gifted to each one of us to protect us from danger. But instead, it creates danger where there is none. Instead of us taking precautions, it makes us panic. The panic stops us from using our ability to choose. It defuses our intellect, and our mind produces many more negative thoughts.

If you look around, you can classify people as primarily positive or negative people. Some people live with fear, worry, stress, anxiety, pessimism, doubt or indifference. These negative emotions become the raw material and their thought factory, the mind, constantly produces negative thoughts which lead to negative feelings and negative actions.

What happens to somebody who lives with positive emotions? They live with faith, hope, trust, enthusiasm, confidence, courage, optimism, forgiveness, and compassion. These positive emotions feed the mind with positivity and create positive thoughts that are followed by positive feelings and actions.

What we don't realize is that fear is the father of negative emotions. It constantly produces other negative emotions and fills our life with misery. The fear of death and it stealing our ability to enjoy life, is cumulatively caused by all negative emotions caused by fear. People wonder why fear dominates their life. They don't realize that by itself, fear is not a negative emotion when we use it as a trigger to warn us of certain dangers. But when we let fear become a fierce bulldog in our life, it locks us up behind the gates.

David used to be chased by a bulldog every day, till one day he eliminated fear and replaced it with courage and confidence. The next day when the bulldog chased him, he turned to face his fear. What did he see? When the bulldog opened its mouth, it had no teeth! Most of our fears have no teeth. They appear like the bulldog, fierce and deadly. But when we examine them, our fears have no teeth. They cannot cause us harm. But they linger in our mind and along with all other negative emotions continue to rob from us our gift of life. Those who flip over from the negative to positive, deliberately eliminate fear as they fill their life with all positive emotions. They live with courage, confidence, and optimism because they wipe out fear.

CHAPTER

42

THE REALIZATION OF THE TRUTH OVERCOMES FEAR

When we realize the true meaning of fear,
It makes our fear of death, disappear.

The first step to overcome the fear of death and to live is to realize the truth that a fear is just a fear, not a danger. If you look back at your life, you may have had hundreds of fears. But how many of those fears became actual dangers? Very few! Therefore, we must first realize that our fears are far more numerous than real dangers.

While fear itself is false, Realization makes us understand that even death is an illusion. Those who live without Realization of the true meaning of death, consider death to be something horrifying, tragic, deadly, and dangerous. But that is not the truth. Just like some people consider the darkness post a sunset to be depressing, others realize that it is a part of the cycle of this world. The sun will rise again and so will we. When we realize the Law of Karma and how we will return to earth, a large part of our fear of death will disappear.

What does Realization do? It makes us understand that we cannot escape from death, that death is certain, and every living organism must die. This makes us accept death and makes us live with courage, facing both life and death as the cycle of our existence.

The biggest Realization is that we are not the one that dies. We are the immortal Soul, the Spirit that departs at death. Then why cry when we see somebody die? It is like somebody cries when their favourite pair of jeans gets torn. We have to learn to accept and move on and the Realization of the truth about

death liberates us from the fear of it.

When we realize we are not the body, half of our fear will disappear. When we further realize we are the Divine Soul, then death becomes a celebration. Death is the only way for us to be free from the suffering of the body, misery of the mind, and agony of the ego. But we must realize the truth, the truth that there is no meaning in living with the fear of death. Death is inevitable. When the body dies, we are liberated, to be reborn if we think we are the ME – Mind and Ego. If our Realization is complete and we realize we are the Divine Soul, then there is no rebirth. Death liberates us and unites us with the Divine. This Realization of the truth eliminates the fear of death. It helps us to overcome the tragic mystery that we were taught death is. Realization stops us from following others who cry when they see somebody die. It is natural to feel sad about losing a dear one, but we must realize that death is a reality, and we have to accept it. Once we realize this, we are free from the fear of death. We live with courage and confidence, willing to accept death whenever it comes, living blissfully and peacefully, every moment of our life.

If we do not realize the truth and continue to remain ignorant about death, the fear of death will make us suffer every moment that we live.

CHAPTER

43

ENLIGHTENMENT SWEEPS AWAY THE DARKNESS

What causes in us the fear of death?
Ignorance, that with Enlightenment must be swept.

Just like we sweep away the dirt in our room, we have to sweep away the darkness of ignorance that envelops us with the fear of death. Because we are ignorant of what death is and about what actually happens after death, we live and die in misery, fearing death every day. But why fear death? It will come when it has to, and we can do nothing to stop it.

There was a king who lived in constant fear of death. One day, Yama, the Lord of Death came to him in his dreams and told him, 'Get ready because tomorrow is your last day on earth. I will come to you and take you when the last ray of the sun is seen on earth.' The king woke up from the nightmare and called for a meeting of all the wise men. As per their advice, the king decided to run away from death by leaving his kingdom. To foil the plan of death, he got on to his best horse. The journey was long, but the horse was strong. The horse galloped away without a break, even to drink water. It seemed that the horse knew it had to save the life of its master. As if by Divine grace, at the last stroke of the ray of the sun, the horse succeeded in galloping out of the kingdom. The king heaved a sigh of relief and got off the horse to let it drink a little water. He thanked the horse and promised that he would glorify it for its amazing feat. Just as the sky turned dark, Yama, the Lord of death, was waiting for the king. He smiled and told the king, 'You made it easy for me. The horse knew exactly where to bring you.'

Can we run away from death? Can we do anything to extend life even by a moment? Doctors can keep us on a ventilator and keep us breathing, but the truth is that death is beyond

our control. It is in the hands of the Divine. When, how, where we will be born and we will die, is unknown to us. It is in the hands of the one who gives us life and then takes it away. Because we are ignorant of this, we suffer and fear death.

What is the way to overcome the fear of death? We must go in quest of the truth and overcome ignorance. This is called Realization or Enlightenment. When we switch on the light within, we realize the truth that we are not the body that dies. We realize we are not even the Mind and Ego, the ME, that creates Karma and is reborn after death. We are the Divine Soul, immortal and deathless. When the body dies, we are liberated and can be united with the Divine. For this, we need Enlightenment which sweeps away all the darkness of ignorance. Living with the light of truth makes us fearless about death. Death is a reality and we become ready, ever-ready to accept it because it is at the moment of death, that we can be liberated and united with God.

Enlightenment is not knowledge; it is the Realization of the Truth. There is a lot of light in our 'outside life', all around us by which we see everything. But what about the light within? There is no light; there is darkness. This darkness makes us suffer as it causes ignorance. Once we are enlightened, we learn to live with surrender and acceptance.

CHAPTER

44

THE ART OF ACCEPTANCE AND SURRENDER

Why do we suffer death and live in fear?
Because we don't learn to accept and surrender.

To truly live a life of joy, bliss, and peace, we have to learn the art of Divine acceptance and surrender. Otherwise, death will be like a dark shadow that constantly stops us from enjoying the sunshine of life. We have one of the two choices, either to constantly live with the fear of death or to wipe out the dark shadow of death and enjoy the sunshine of life.

Those who learn the art of acceptance and Divine surrender, overcome the fear of death and live joyously, compared to those who fear death, every moment that they live. They remove the thought of death from their mind completely and try to make the best of every moment as it unfolds.

How do these blessed people live with acceptance? They accept life as it unfolds, realizing that nothing is happening by luck. They realize it is their own past Karma that is unfolding. Just like fruits appear on the tree, depending on the seeds that we have planted, such blessed people accept whatever is happening in their life, knowing very well, it is because of the deeds they have planted in the past. They realize that one day when the moment of death has to arrive, it will arrive. They also realize that they have a choice and the will to live and to act, creating new Karma that can, in a way, control their destiny. Instead of worrying about death and losing life, they resolve to live a disciplined life with moral values and ethics, creating Karma for a better future. While they do their best to control their destiny, they realize a Divine Truth – they realize that man may be in control of his

deeds, but he is not in control of the results thereof. The results lie in the hands of the Divine and they learn to surrender their life to the Supreme Power who controls whatever happens on earth. Because they learn to accept and to surrender, they overcome the fear of death.

Most of us live in ignorance. Neither do we learn to accept, nor to surrender. We question whatever happens in life and we wonder why bad things happen to good people. We do not learn about the Law of Action and Reaction nor do we learn to trust the Divine. The result is the constant fear of death. We fear a virus, an accident, and even an insect because we don't trust that we are in the care of a Divine Power. We don't understand that death cannot touch us, until the destined moment comes and when the destined moment arrives, nothing can stop it. We do not accept the reality of life and death and we do not surrender to the plan of the Divine, which is beyond our comprehension and control.

In the bargain, we forget to live life. We forget to enjoy this gift called life which is a very short journey from birth to death and we lose the precious moments of it, constantly living with the fear that we will die.

CHAPTER

45

A JOURNEY CALLED LIFE

Life is a Journey. We must enjoy each moment of it.
When we worry and we fear death, we lose it!

The journey of life is short. It lasts from birth to death. While it is actually about 25,000 days on average, we actually get about 10,000 days to live because the first 10,000 days escape in growing up. The next is what we have to live, and the balance life is the descent to our exit from this planet. The first 1/3rd of our life is consumed growing up and understanding life. Till we are about 30, we really don't get a grip on our career, our philosophy, though some of us may be up and running at 20. But then, we are just running. We are making money and creating success. We think that life is a journey of achievement and we keep on achieving success after success. Before we realize it, we are caught in that maze, in the race to be an ace. We make a lot of money, but we lose something that is most precious, we lose life itself!

At the end of the journey, the glass of life that was full becomes empty and the glass of money and success gets filled. Then we realize that we are soon going to die. We cannot exchange our money and success for life. Even if we give away all our money, we cannot get back a single day of life. Then, death stares at us in our face and we begin to worry about losing all our life's earnings in a flash when we die. We were so busy making money that we forgot to enjoy life. Now, every day is consumed thinking about what we will do with our money, who we will leave it to, how we can continue the legacy that we started, and soon life is over. For those who do not get the opportunity of achieving success and money, life is a struggle. There are no peaks and valleys, just a struggle to

live and the struggle itself creates the fear of death. What if we are unable to survive through life? Rich or poor, the thought of death makes us struggle before we depart.

Isn't it ironical that instead of enjoying this journey called life, we live with the fear of death? Instead of enjoying this beautiful earth and all it has to offer, we exist trying to survive through life. We get so caught up in the material world, in our duties, that we forget to explore what life truly is. Very few of us stop to ask the question, 'Who am I in reality and why am I here?' We live and we die, and we come back again for another innings on earth. Some of us realize it, but most of us don't. The game of life continues.

Don't we see people die every day, just as we see people being born? A very few amongst us truly discover life. We live happily, without worries and without the fear of death. We spend our life with peace and joy and end it without any regrets. We realize we came with nothing and we will go with nothing. Then, why fear death? Why not just enjoy this journey called life? Why not find the true purpose and meaning of life? Why not live every day of life before we die? Few amongst us are blessed to live with this paradigm, throwing the fear of death out of the window and enjoying sunshine and rain, pleasure and pain, loss and gain as it comes. They are the ones who truly live.

CHAPTER

46

FEAR STEALS THE 'NOW'

Life is made up of moments. Life is just in the 'now'.
Let's not live with the fear of 'Tomorrow'…
Let's take this vow.

Most of us lose life by losing the present moment. We are so worried about 'yesterday' and about 'tomorrow', that we lose today. But 'yesterday' is gone. We can do nothing about it and 'tomorrow' is not yet born. When it comes, it will be 'today'. Instead of living in today, with faith, trust, hope, and enthusiasm, enjoying every moment of life, we lose life to our fears and our worries.

The treasure of the 'now' is all that we have. But because of our ignorance, we continue to lose our biggest gift, 'the Present', as we jump into the past and the future. Who steals our 'now'? There are many thieves – worry, anxiety, stress, anger, revenge, but the biggest amongst them is fear. The fear of death subconsciously robs our moment, moment after moment, and stops us from living life. It seems we are scared of little things but haven't we realized by now that subconsciously we live with the fear of death? The fear grows into our life like the roots of a tree and spreads into our existence. We fear a little lizard. We fear a monkey. We fear a dog. Our life is full of fears.

What does fear do? It steals our moment, our 'now'. Before we realize it, it steals our life. Because moments create hours, hours create days, days create weeks, months, and years. Years create life. When we lose moments of life to fear, we lose life itself. Let us take a vow today, that we will not lose the 'now' to fear. Let us promise ourselves that we will not let the fear of death, or for that matter, other fears, worries, anxieties,

steal our moments of life, the 'now' that belongs to us. Instead of letting fear rob us of our life, why not destroy fear and start to live? Why not realize that fear is killing us far before death is? Why not understand that fear is robbing us of the gift of life as it steals our moments?

The challenge is simple. Take charge of the 'now'. Take charge of the present moment. Live it with faith and courage, eliminate fear, worry and anxiety. Learn to live your dream. Don't dream of dying. Every 'body' has to die, and that moment will come one day. Why die every day living with the fear of death and losing the gift of the Now?

The trick is simple – do it moment by moment. The fear of death is sure to return, just as other fears and anxieties will come back. Just sweep them away from this moment. Learn to live life moment by moment. Soon you will realize that you have overcome the fear of death and you have started to live. Stop watching bad news on television and on the internet. Don't psych yourself with what the media tries to fill your mind with. The fear psychosis is a poison that can destroy your precious moment, moment after moment and stop you from enjoying this beautiful journey called life. Surrender your life to the Divine, eliminate fear, as you take charge of each moment and make the best of it.

CHAPTER

47

DON'T DIE BEFORE YOU DIE

Death is certain. It will come one day!
But some people are strange, they die every day!

Those who live with the fear of death forget to live life. The constant fear of death kills them even before death does. Life is a gift, it is a beautiful journey, and we must learn to live, not just to exist. If we let the fear of death take charge of our life, we will die long before we actually go to our grave.

Some people are like the living dead. Their spirit is dead, long before their body dies. Their life is a life of existence. Then, they are only waiting for the final ceremonies. But is this the way to live?

We must not die before we die. We must live before we die. Every moment of life is a gift. We must make the best of it. We must explore this beautiful world and all that the Creator has created in it. We must not let fear make us a frog in the well. Many of us live like a caveman, who believes that there is nothing beyond his cave. He lives in a cave and dies in the cave, without realizing there is a world outside the cave.

Can you stop death from happening? Nobody can escape from death, but we can escape from the fear of death and we can start living till our last breath. Some people live on a ventilator for years together. Neither can they move nor walk or talk. They are like vegetables. The machine keeps them alive and while there is a hope of revival, even with ventilators and all modern equipment, nobody can stop a multi-organ failure which will lead to certain death. We can prolong life for a few days, but ultimately, death will take over. But if we surrender to the

Divine Will and let death happen when it has to happen, then, we can truly live till our last moment.

Why fear death? Why not resign to the Divine Will and accept the moment of death when it has to come? We can take all the precautions and necessary measures to live a long healthy life, but if we become so psyched about death that we stop enjoying life, we stop taking chances, we avoid every possible risk, then we have started to die even before we die.

Mike was 99, but for the past 30 years, he had never left his home, never had a meal outside, never enjoyed a drink, never travelled to see this beautiful world. He avoided all possible risks that would put his life in danger. He was so scared of death that he forgot to live. He confined himself and protected himself so that he could be safe. He wouldn't meet people and expose himself to any possible health hazard. Did he actually live? If we just breathe till we die, then we are no better than a machine.

Life is not about adding Years to your Life,
It is about adding Life to your Years.

CHAPTER

48

FEAR KILLS PEOPLE EVERY DAY

Death kills people in life but once.
Fear of death points every moment with guns.

There is no doubt that we will all die, at least our body will, if we do not realize we are the immortal Soul. One day, the mortal body will end its journey and we will have to leave this earth. Nobody can escape death. We can't escape out of life alive. But the fear of death makes us dance to its tune, every day as we live. It destroys us, our thoughts, feelings, actions and our life itself. Even though we are alive, fear stops us from living each day, threatening us with 'fear guns' till ultimately death arrives.

When we know for certain we have to die, then why fear death? When we know that death is not in our hands, and it will arrive when it has to, why do we let the fear of death kill us today and stop us from living our life? And then, the fear of death continues day after day. It makes us like puppets and the strings of our life are controlled by the fear of death.

Raj lived with the constant fear of death. In the beginning, it was not his own fear that had made him miserable, but it was his parents' fear. They were overprotective because he was the only child. 'Don't play sports, don't go for excursions, don't stay over at friends' place, don't go out at night, don't learn swimming, don't drive a bike.' His life was full of 'don'ts'. The overprotective environment he grew in, stopped him from experiencing life. The fear of losing their only child drove his parents to insanity.

After he grew up, the madness continued. They controlled whatever he did, whatever he ate, wherever he went, and whoever he met. Fear

dominated his life so much so that he did not take any risks – 'no risk, no glory', so his mundane life soon expired. One day when Raj looked back at his life, he realized that he had forgotten to live. The fear of death had killed him long ago and it continued to kill him every day that he lived! He was afraid he would die in a plane crash, or in a sinking ship, or in a train accident, or if he escaped all this, then his car would crash. He protected himself so much that he never left his city. He was so scared of the bat and the ball, the bow and the arrow, and the clubs, that he never enjoyed any sport. He never jumped into the swimming pool, let alone walk on the beach or enjoy the ocean. Raj suddenly realized that he had not lived life. At most, all he had done was to exist. He knew that one day he would die. His parents died, but they filled him with the fear of death before they left. Now he tried to snap out of it, but the fear of dying stopped him from living. The ignorance that he could not escape death enveloped him in darkness and he could not see the light of Truth. Every morning that he woke up, it was not to live, but just to breathe, to exist, to sleep, till one day, he would ultimately die.

Of what use is such a life? If we live, but we constantly fear death and we forget to truly make the best of life, then we have let fear kill us long before the moment of death arrives.

CHAPTER

49

LIVE BEFORE YOU DIE

Of course, you will die. But for now, don't cry!
Unwrap the beautiful gift called life
and discover 'Who am I'.

Who is the one that truly lives? It is he, who puts aside the fear of death and enjoys every moment of life. The rest don't live, they just exist.

What is it to truly live before we die? Life is a gift made up of years. There are months, weeks, days and moments. Every moment is an opportunity to live. It is up to us. The moment is a gift, we can use it or lose it. If we let the fear of death grab the moment called life, then we don't live in that moment, we die. We have to eliminate death from each moment of life. We have to enjoy every moment of life, whatever it maybe to us.

To somebody, making the best of life maybe travelling the world. To somebody else, it may be planting a beautiful garden, while to somebody else it may be painting. There are people for whom life is about playing their favourite sport, while the foodies just live to eat. Whatever be your passion, light the fire to it. Make your life exciting. Look forward to each moment of life, each day, each week, each month and each year. Be fulfilled and satisfied that you have not just consumed life but lived it. Imagine having a dream of travelling the world, but doing it watching the television. Imagine being scared of dying and not starting to paint that dream painting you wanted to. Imagine loving the ocean, but never jumping into the water because of the fear of death. Ultimately, we all have to die, but if we don't do what we want to do, we don't live our dreams, then we have died long ago. Then we are not living every day, we are just dying till we die.

Stop and look back at your life. Are you living your dreams, or are you living your fears? Is your life full of excitement or have you made a prison in which you drag through every day of your life? Have you surrounded yourself with imaginary bars of the fear of death, that now surround you in a cage and you are locked in, captured and consumed by the fear of death? When will you break open that cage? Will you just die of old age, or will you get on to the earth stage and experience life? Will you continue to let fear control you, or will you do the things you fear so that the fear can disappear, and you can start enjoying life, start living it?

Are you going to die every day that you live or are you going to live every day till you die? You have a choice. You can't escape death, but you can surely die before you die, cry before you die and never discover the earth and the sky. When you stop and realize – 'Who am I' and realize, 'I am not the body that will die', I am the Divine Spirit, the Soul, you will be liberated from the fear of death. You will celebrate every moment of life. It is only when you understand what fear is, what death is, and who you are, that you truly start to live this beautiful gift called life.

CHAPTER

50

WHEN YOU OVERCOME THE FEAR OF DEATH, YOU START TO LIVE

Do you want to truly live? Then enjoy every breath.
Make the best of every day, till the moment of death.

Are you overcome by the fear of death or have you overcome it? Are you living your dreams or living your fears? If you are one of those who are prisoners of fear and are captured by the worry of dying, then you have not started living. It's time to start living before you suddenly die. Here is some news for you. You are surely going to die! If not today, then tomorrow or next month, or next year. If you are meant to live for 25 years, you will. But if you don't live each day that is a gift to you, then you are as good as a dead body today. Even though you breathe, you are not living, you are just existing, just like the table and chair in front of you. They will never die, but one day, you and I will. If we do not live every day that we are alive with courage and joy and we let death consume us in every breath, then where are we living?

Overcome the fear of death. At least by now, after reading this book, you should snap out of it. You must realize that this priceless gift of life is not meant to be consumed. It is meant to be lived. Have the courage and the confidence, the faith and the hope, the enthusiasm and the trust, to let go of your fears. Flush the fear of death down the drain before it gets into your brain and destroys your life. Realize that we cannot escape the moment of death and start living.

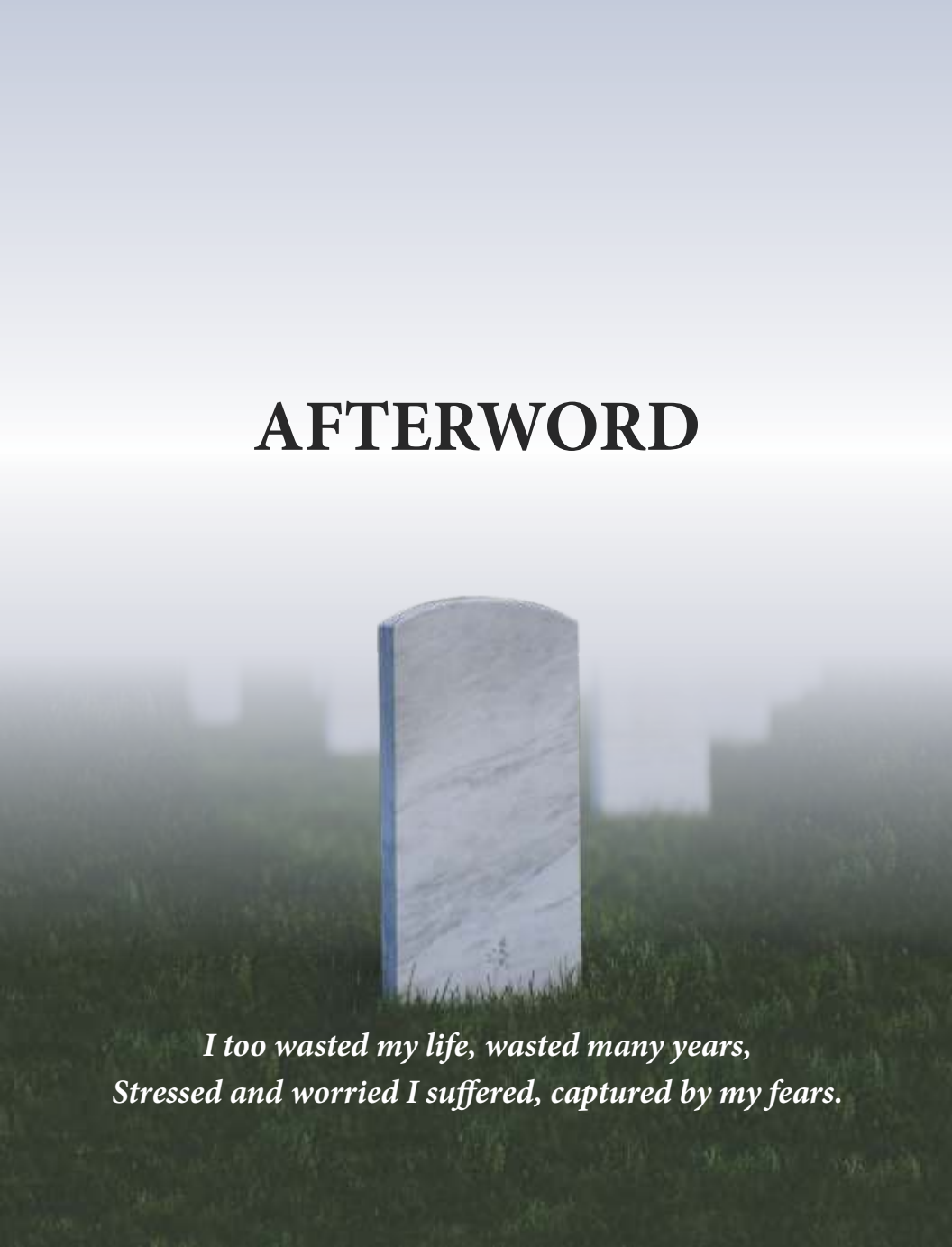
Imagine today was your last day. What would you do? Would you fear death and hide under a blanket? Would you lock yourself in your home and consume the last few hours of your breath or would you get out and live? I would grab every

moment of life if it was my last day. We must think every day is our last and we must enjoy life.

There was once a young boy who used to love to ride a race-bicycle that belonged to his friend. All-day long, his friend used the bicycle, and he did not get a chance to ride it. One day his friend told him, I will leave the bicycle with you in the night, but I will pick it at sunrise. The boy was excited. He went on riding the bicycle on every possible street and did all the stunts he wanted to but was afraid of the sun rising, when he would have to return the bicycle. He was exhausted at sunrise and he parked the bicycle and slept. When he woke up, he found that his friend had not taken the bicycle. But by then, he had no interest in riding the bike anymore.

Such is life! When we know that we can enjoy it only for a limited time, we make it so exciting. Otherwise, we just let it be. We lose value for this beautiful gift of life. We must learn to live every moment as if it was our last. We must learn to enjoy life every day. We must cycle through life, enjoy every breath, forget about death. It will come when it has to. We must enjoy the journey. The moment we stop cycling through life, we stop, we fall, we die. Live before you die!

AFTERWORD



I too wasted my life, wasted many years,
Stressed and worried I suffered, captured by my fears.

Like anybody else, I lived with fear. I feared everything, feared failure, feared loss of love, feared losing my wealth and losing my treasured relationships, but my biggest fear was my fear of death. It followed me in every breath and tortured me with misery and sorrow.

The fear of death is not like a fracture of a bone or a wound that can see blood. It goes deep within, piercing the heart and gushing poison to every cell of the body. I felt its toxic effects as I lived, realizing that I was just existing. Then, one day, I got rid of fear. All the suffering disappeared in a flash. How did this happen? As long as I lived as the body-mind, controlled and led by the ego, I was a prisoner of fear and the fear of death choked me in my thoughts and in my feelings, controlling and constricting my decisions. The moment I realized the truth, I was liberated from the fear of death.

When I realized the truth about death and about life, and realized that I was not this mortal body, I was free from the fear of death. I realized that every 'body' has to die. I too would leave this physical body. Nobody can escape death. But when I realized that death is not the end, but only a bend, then, there was no fear. I realized that I was the Divine Soul. I was not a human being having a spiritual experience. I was a Spirit having a human experience. This Realization made me overcome the fear of death and I started living.

Today, I am in Kashmir, after 33 years of not visiting this

paradise, so close to my hometown, Bangalore. What stopped me? It was fear. Not the fear of pain or loss, but the fear of death. The media has blown up the danger and fear has gripped several people, stopping them from visiting the Switzerland of India. Is there no danger, no risk? There is danger and risk everywhere, even while walking on the street, driving a car or taking a flight. But death is not something that will happen by chance. Death is destined and as long as we use our intelligence to take the right precautions and live with courage and confidence, we will realize that death will come when it has to.

I do everything that many people are scared of. I go snorkelling and see the Divine underwater world, I paraglide from the top of the mountains and I cruise in the middle of the oceans. I am fearless. I have overcome the fear of death and surrendered my life to the Divine, knowing that death will come when it is destined to. I live in the ever-presence of God, accepting his Divine Will, in surrender. I celebrate every moment of life. This is the way to live. I inspire people to realize the truth that we cannot escape death, but we can kill ourselves with the fear of death and die every day that we live. It is a choice. Instead, we can choose to live with faith, realizing we are a manifestation of the Divine, enjoying every moment of life in bliss!

POEM

When you overcome
THE FEAR OF DEATH...
you start to Live!

Why die every day in fear?
Why fear death and cry?
Let's overcome the fear of death
And celebrate each day till we die

Fears are False Expectations
A False Expectation Appearing Real
It makes the wolf seem bigger than it is
Fear steals our life-treasure, our pearl

When we let fear take control of our life
It stops us from doing what we must do
It imprisons us within our own mind
It makes us feel blue

Every moment we think, 'I will die'
We are scared of the ground and the sky
Fear fools us that death is waiting
Makes us miserable and cry

We are scared of a disease
Think a coughing virus will kill
Fear steals from us our immunity
Robs from us our will

As long as we live with the fear of death
We will lose this gift called life
It may seem we are walking and talking
But inside, we are full of strife

We must use courage to overcome fear
Live with confidence and surrender to His will
Not be scared of a disease or an animal
And constantly fear that it will kill

For death is certain and it will come
But it will come but once
If we live with the constant fear of death
In life, we will forget to dance

I am not this body that will die
That I am the ego and mind is a myth
When we realize we are the Divine Soul
Then we celebrate life, the Truth

For life is a gift from the Divine
We must live from birth until death
Living with bliss, peace, and Joy
Every moment and in every breath

This world is a beautiful heaven
We must not imagine death and going to hell
We must not believe in all the fairy tales
That people and the scriptures tell

Overcome the fear of death and live
The secret of life is this
Kill fear realizing you are the Divine Soul
Live with courage, with joy, and with bliss!

BY
AiR
Atman in Ravi

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

AiR - *Atman* in Ravi

AiR – *Atman* in Ravi, is an Embodied Soul whose only mission in life is to 'Help People Realize the Truth'. He was born in Bangalore on October 15, 1966. At a very young age, Ravi V. Melwani mastered the craft of business and became a very successful businessman who revolutionized retailing in India with the stores KidsKemp, Big KidsKemp, and Kemp Fort. After making millions, he realized that life is not just about making money. He shut down his business at the age of 40 and started making a difference doing H.I.S. work – Humanitarian, Inspirational and Spiritual work.

As a part of the Humanitarian initiative, 3 charitable homes were set up to provide free medical treatment and care to the poor, destitute, and needy. Today, over 600 suffering homeless people who are picked up from the streets are served and cared for in 3 destitute homes and provided with free shelter, food, clothing, and medical care. AiR built a Shiva Temple in the year 1995 in Bangalore, which is now known as the Shivoham Shiva Temple. AiR now believes that religion is just a kindergarten of Spirituality, and people should go beyond religion to truly realize God.

One day, his Guru inspired him to introspect and find

answers to the following questions: Who am I? What is the purpose of my life? Is life just meant to seek pleasures and to live and die without any purpose? What happens after death? Will I be reborn? Who is God? Where is God? What is God? What is the Soul? Where are heaven and hell? What is Enlightenment? Several questions like these took him on a quest, a search for the Truth. He gave up his life of Achievement and Fulfilment in search of the final peak of life: Enlightenment.

After a few years of intense search in retreat, deep in the mountains, he realized that we are not this body. We are the Soul, the *Atman*. He changed his name to AiR – *Atman* in Ravi. He metamorphosed to AiR and gave up his entire life as Ravi V. Melwani and started living as an instrument of God doing His Divine Will. This led to several Realizations that formed his new mission of life – to Help People Realize the Truth.

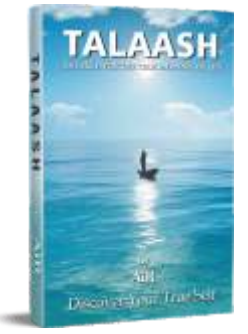
Since then, AiR's life has been dedicated to reaching out and helping people to eradicate the ignorance that they live in. Based on his realizations, AiR has published over 40 books, composed and sung about 1190 bhajans written several blogs, quotes, and poems. He has taken up various other initiatives that can lead people towards the Truth like conducting AiR Spiritual Retreats and giving talks that help people evolve on their spiritual journey. He is a TEDx speaker and is also invited to speak at several organizations like YPO (Young Presidents' Organization), Rotary Club,

Lions Club, and at many corporates, schools, and colleges. He conducts webinars every week on Zoom and Facebook Live to help people realize the ultimate purpose of their life.

AiR has realized the Truth that we are not the body, the mind, or the ego; we are the Divine Soul. And to realize this is our Ultimate Goal. He lives his life with just one mission – to help people Ask, Investigate, and Realize the Truth. Being blessed with everything, he seeks nothing except to fulfil this mission of life.

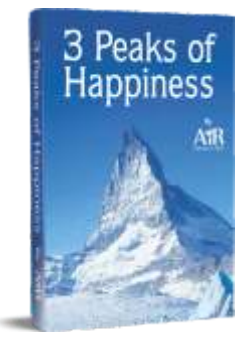
Started with nothing…
Became something…
Achieved everything,
Only to realize we are nothing!

BOOKS BY THE AUTHOR



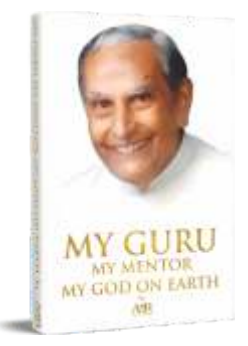
1. Talaash

Talaash means 'search' or a 'quest'. This book by AiR recounts his own spiritual quest for the Ultimate Truth that led him to the Realization that we are neither the body nor the mind, but the Divine Soul.



2. 3 Peaks of Happiness

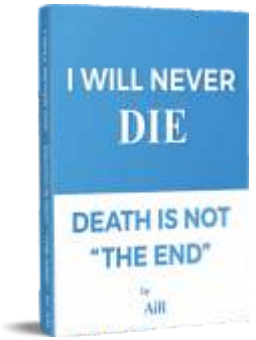
This book talks about the universal quest of humanity—Happiness. It explains the ways through which people can reach the third peak of Happiness—Enlightenment which lies beyond the two peaks of Happiness—Achievement and Fulfilment. The third peak liberates us from the prisons of misery and sorrow and gives us eternal joy and bliss.



3. My Guru, My Mentor, My God on Earth

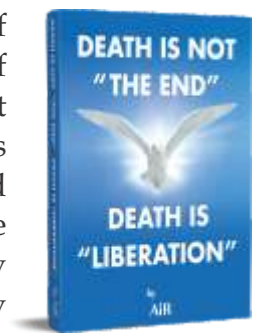
This book is AiR's tribute to his Guru, Dada J.P. Vaswani. AiR shares his experiences with Dada and how Dada's philosophy and teachings were instrumental in guiding him to begin his spiritual quest and bringing about the transformation in him.

4. I will Never Die, Death is Not "The End"



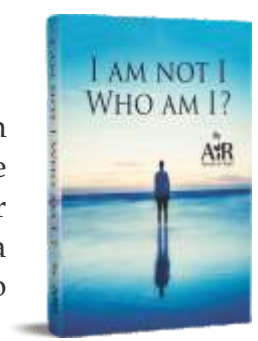
In the journey of his life, AiR Realized many truths. One of the truths is a revelation—we never die; Death is not the end but a bend to transcend. The body will die, but the one who lives in the body never dies. This book explains this truth in detail.

5. Death is Not "The End." Death is "Liberation"



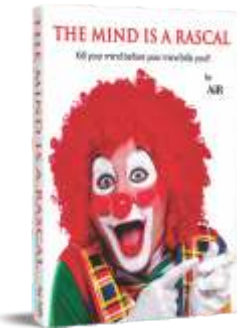
The second book by AiR in the series of books on 'Death' touches upon the secret of Kathopanishad which talks about what happens after death. One of the two things can happen: if we think we are the Body and Mind as a doer, we are reborn, but if we realize that we are the Soul and not the body and mind, we are liberated to eternal joy and peace.

6. I Am Not I. Who Am I?



This is an insightful book by AiR which talks of his quest and Realization that we are not who we think we are. We have a car but we are not the car. Similarly, we have a body but we are not the body. Then, who are we?

7. The Mind is a Rascal

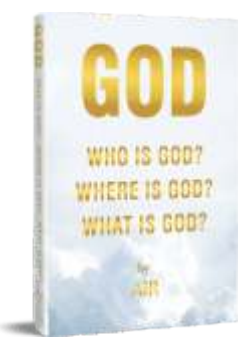


You always thought that the mind is king—it is everything. But it's a rascal! Try this. Sit quietly for an hour, and try to find the mind. Where is it? You will realize that the mind doesn't exist. This book by AiR will show us how the mind makes us suffer. It is time to find the rascal and kill it before it kills us.

8. A Cosmic Drama

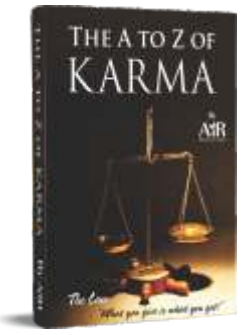
This book challenges the reader to explore the illusory nature of this world—whatever is happening in life is not real; it is nothing but a Cosmic Drama. If we understand this simple truth, we can enjoy the show called life.

9. Who is God? Where is God? What is God?



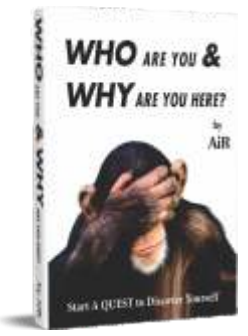
These questions might seem simple enough but nobody really knows the answers. We all know that God exists. We pray to a God as per our Religion but what is the Truth about God? Has anybody seen God? Where is God? This book will change your perception and belief about God and help you Realize God.

10. The A to Z Karma



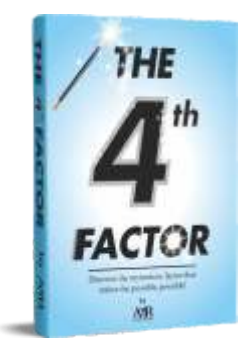
Most people are aware of the concept of Karma – the Universal Law that states, 'What you give is what you get.' But not everybody knows the A to Z of Karma that we can actually transcend Karma, escape from all misery and sorrow, and ultimately attain Liberation or *Moksha*. This book reveals the secret of eternal joy and peace—a life without any misery or suffering.

11. Who Are You and Why Are You Here?



This is a simple book that prompts us to ask the right questions to discover the secret of our life—who we are in reality and what the purpose of our life is. The answers to these questions hold the key to a meaningful and blissful life.

12. The 4th Factor

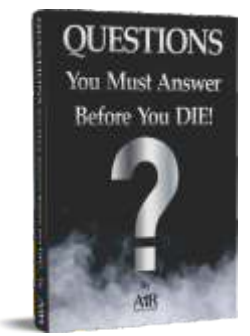


Man gets upset when his efforts don't bear fruit. This is because man is ignorant about the 4th Factor that is beyond human comprehension. Without its consent, even the possible becomes impossible. This is an informative book that makes the readers understand why things happen the way they happen!

13. Be Happy in the NOW!

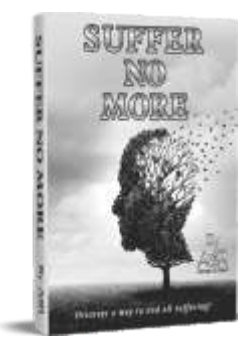
Every human being on earth wants to be happy. There is nobody who enjoys pain. But what is the secret of eternal joy, bliss and peace? It is being happy in the NOW. With this book, AiR hopes to inspire people to live life moment by moment if they really want to be happy.

14. Questions You Must Answer before you Die!



Most of us live and die but we don't ask the question—Why? We just exist! This book presents a series of important questions with answers that can guide us to the Realization of the Truth and help us live with meaning, purpose, and joy.

15. Suffer No More

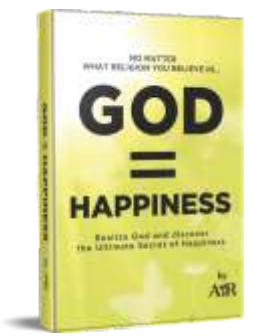


'Suffer No More' is a personal experience of overcoming anguish, anxiety, distress, and grief. It is an analysis of suffering, what causes it and how we can overcome it. While there is pain, we can do away with suffering. This book will tell us how.

16. Success is not Happiness, Happiness is Success

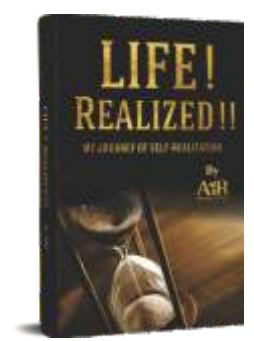
People want to win because this makes them happy, just as failure makes them miserable. This book explains how success does not bring happiness and how this belief is only an illusion. In fact, instead of chasing success, we should try to be happy! That is true success.

17. God = Happiness



In his quest to discover Truth and the purpose of life, the author realized that people didn't know where exactly to search for happiness. This is a book that takes us far beyond religion to Realize the Truth about God and how God is Happiness.

18. Life! Realized!!

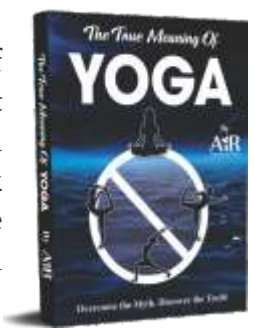


This book is a personal reflection of the author on his several realizations while on his quest for the Truth about everything that matters in the journey of life.

19. True Love is Bliss...Not Just a Kiss

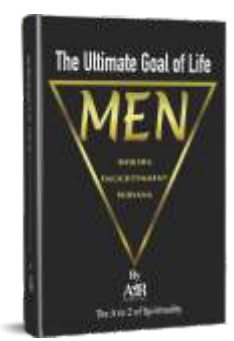
Love, which is a source of joy and happiness, is not really understood by the world. This book is an attempt to explore True Love. True Love is White Divine Love from the Soul that manifests as the 7 colours of human love from the day we are born till the day we die.

20. True Meaning of Yoga



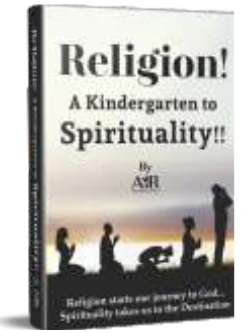
Yoga, today, is primarily taught as a set of body postures and breathing exercises. But this is not true Yoga! Yoga, in reality, is a constant union with the Divine. This book attempts to explain how through Yoga one can be liberated from the cycle of death and rebirth.

21. The Ultimate Goal of Life, MEN — Moksha, Enlightenment, Nirvana



The three most tenable concepts—Moksha, Enlightenment, Nirvana are discussed in this book that can help us reach our Ultimate Goal of Liberation and then Unification with the Divine.

22. Religion! A Kindergarten to Spirituality!!

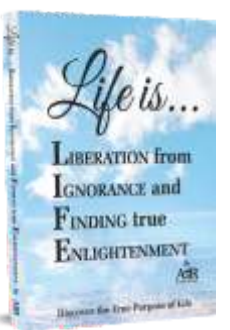


This book discusses how Religion is only the first step towards God-realization. We do not realize that Religion is only a Kindergarten, of which Spirituality is the University, and together they can lead us to God-realization.

23. Why Bad Things Can't Happen to Good People!

This book helps us understand that this world has been created by the Divine and it operates through certain Universal Laws that need no intervention by the Creator. Bad things can never happen to good people, just as apples can't grow on mango trees!

24. LIFE is...Liberation from Ignorance and Finding true Enlightenment



Most people just exist but they don't truly live. They just zoom from womb to tomb, and then life is over. They don't stop to think about their life's true purpose. In the pursuit of happiness, success and achievement, people don't realize that though they lose their most precious gift—life itself. This book reveals what life is all about.

25. The Ladder to Heaven

Most people believe in God and aspire to go to their God in heaven one day. It doesn't matter what our religion is, there is a way to reach God. There is a Ladder that can take us to heaven but we need to ascend the rungs of the Ladder to Heaven. This book shows a step-by-step way to God-realization.

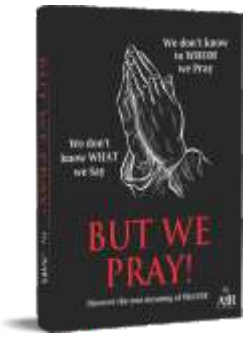
26. FEAR- False Expectations Appearing Real

The world has changed today because of Coronavirus. But it's up to us to live with FEAR or FAITH. There is a difference between Fear and Danger but most of humanity lives with the constant fear of disease and death. Through this book, the author inspires people to live with courage and not panic.

27. Soul – We don't have a Soul... we are the Soul!

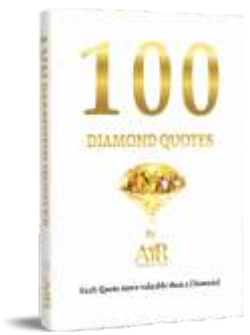
The Soul is mysterious. We are alive because of our Soul. But what exactly is the Soul? We cannot see the Soul, but we all believe that we have one. This book will help genuine seekers of the truth to do some Soul searching and realize - we don't have a Soul...we are the Soul!

28. But We Pray!



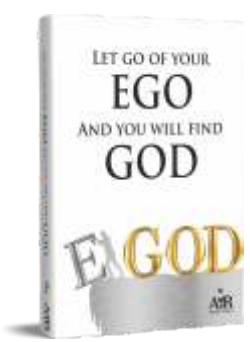
The whole world prays to God. Every religion claims that their God is the real God and their prayer is the most effective form of prayer. Unfortunately, we don't even know the God we pray to nor do we understand what we say in prayer. This book will help us build a Divine connection through prayer.

29. 100 Diamond Quotes



Our life needs a spark and a simple quote can make this difference. This book is a selection of AiR's inspiring quotes on happiness, liberation, realization, spirituality, and enlightenment that can trigger a metamorphosis in us in the quest for the true meaning of life, giving us more happiness than all the diamonds of this world.

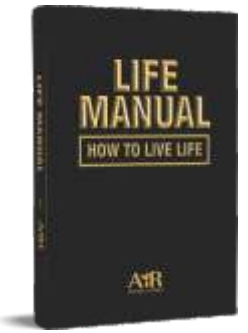
30. Let go of your Ego and you will find God



Are you seeking God? There is a way to find God. All you have to do is to let go of your Ego. Our biggest enemy, ME - Mind and the Ego, envelops us in ignorance and we go round and round in circles without discovering God within. If only we let go of our Ego, we will move from Self-realization to God-realization.

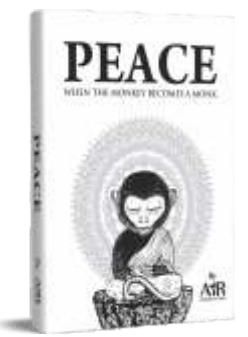
This book will transform your life. It will show you the way to God just as it will guide you on how to let goof your Ego.

31. Life Manual - How to live life?



Whenever we get a new gadget, we read the operating manual before we start using it. But have we ever read a manual on life? Is there such a manual? There is no simple document that tells us what life is, how we should live it and how we should make the most of it. The 'Life Manual' is just the book we have been waiting for.

32. PEACE... When the Monkey becomes a Monk!

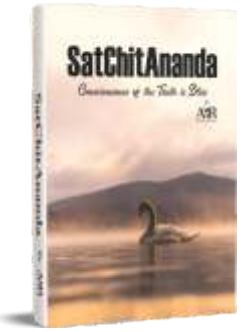


We human beings are enveloped in ignorance. We seek peace of mind but we don't realize that peace is not an external thing; it is our original state. It is our own mind that steals our peace by constantly jumping from thought to thought. Unless we tame the monkey mind and make it into a monk, we will never be able to experience true bliss. This book will show us the way.

33. SatChitAnanda - Consciousness of the Truth is Bliss

Very few people go in search of the true meaning of life. If

they become conscious of the truth, they experience *Ananda*, a bliss unknown to the common man. This book reveals the secret of SatChitAnanda and shows us the way to live every moment of life with seamless joy and peace.

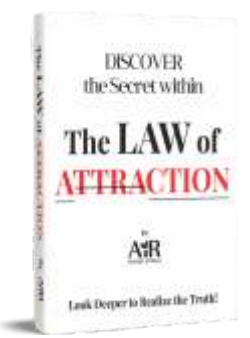


34. Neti Neti, Tat Twam Asi - Not This, Not This, Thou Art That

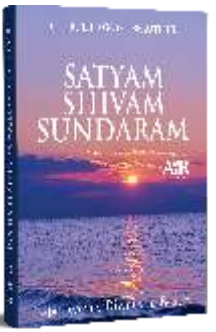
What is the way for a common man to be enlightened and realize the truth? This book reveals the key to opening the door to this profound realization. It is *Neti Neti*, *Tat Twam Asi,* Not This, Not This, Thou Art That. To Realize the Truth of 'Who am I?', the first thing we must discover is 'Who I am not'.

35. Discover the SECRET within The LAW of AttraCTION

Many of us believe in the Law of Attraction, that we can realize our dreams through this magical, mystical law. But then, why aren't some people able to translate their dreams into reality despite believing in this law? This book reveals the 'real secret' within the Law of Attraction that actually works. It is the law of Action.

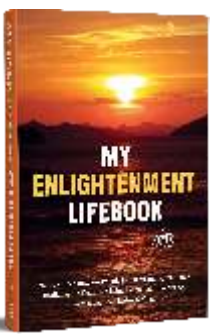


36. Satyam Shivam Sundaram - Experiencing Divinity in Beauty



This book, based on the ancient chant Satyam Shivam Sundaram - the Truth is God is Beautiful, will help us realize a profound truth, that Beauty is Divinity. It will make us experience God in everything beautiful. This book will change the way we pray and build a closer connection with God, as we realize the Divine in the temple of our heart.

37. My Enlightenment Lifebook



This book is a treasure of crystalized wisdom that is put together in a simplified manner to help one Realize the Truth. It is not a textbook of knowledge. It is a workbook of Enlightenment where every page on the left is offered to the reader to make notes, jot down thoughts and questions as one progresses on the path of Realization.

And Now...

38. When you overcome the FEAR of DEATH, You start to LIVE

Coming Soon...

39. A Simple Solution To World Peace

When you overcome
THE FEAR OF DEATH... *you start to Live!*

Why should we fear death when we know we can't escape it? We know we cannot control it. We know that it stops us from enjoying our life. Still we continue to live with the Fear of Death. Life is a gift and we barely have a few thousand days before this gift of life is over!

While it seems that we are alive, most of us are paralyzed by the Fear of Death. If we are not scared of the pandemic that we think may kill us, then it could be the fear of an airplane crash, an accident or even the fear of reptiles, which makes us paranoid and live with the Fear of Death. Fear is not a real danger. It is a False Expectation Appearing Real and it makes us miserable every day that we live. Instead of making the best of this beautiful journey called Life, we continue to live with the Fear of Death and suffer miserably.

Death is certain. It will come at its appointed time. Both birth and death are in the hands of the Divine and we have no command over them. Although death happens but once, still we continue to live with the Fear of Death every day, and life itself escapes us. The problem is not just fear, it is the Fear of Death. If we want to truly live life, then we must learn to overcome this Fear of Death. When we overcome our ignorance about death and we realize who is the one that dies, we will be liberated from this misery and live joyously every moment of life till the final and ultimate moment of death comes.

By

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